





Lifecycle 2 Vol2 #10 Jen

Next Generation Magazine









Alphas

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If you can't play it yet, we've seen it Zone of the Enders Titanium Angels Hundred Swords 42



→ Special Cover Story

The Bouncer: Square's PlayStation 2 blockbuster 70 Broadband Gaming: Will it change the way you play? 78 Meet the Xboss an Interview Warriors of Might and Magic 54 with Robbie Bach 90

10/00



KABOOM!











time in early September, you're probably wondering where the bepost summer were. At the time of the writing, it's life early August, and we're stuck in this finanzialis, sould, four saw, which calcular this sould right before Nintendo shows bright before the show the smoothers their bunch lacey. Net all this will likely already have happened in the time it takes to get this kand from our desktops

and kito your hands.
Despate the fact that most of the
unifor players are still holding their
cands close to the cheet — Sony
continues to lone point on its
launch lineup — we've had plenty
to be epic busp, fists, we've bown
the lik off of Squares Physication 2
browler the Bouncer and revealed
eight more Physication 2 tills we
know you've been waiting to regist
about. And while Seny Bifferends,
and Sego didn't how much to say
and Sego didn't how much to say

this month, Microsoft's Xbox chief did. Senior VP Bobble Rach taked to us about all things Xbox starting on page 90. We've also tried debunicing some of the broadhand type, starting on page 78. And what is summer without a road trip! We went to Vegos for the Clastic Caming Expo, and we've

been playing Atari 2600's Koboomi religously since. Next month. Nintendo and Sony become the mad bombers, and we'll be watching closely to see if Project Dolphin and the P52 launch explode or fizzle. Until then, enjoy this issue. We're very pleased with it, and we



₽Finals

TOW THE SCORE OF THE BILEST REMANDES
Iltimate Fighting Championship
cco the Dolphin: Defender of the Future
Vorld Series Baseball 2K1
enchu 2: Birth of the Stealth Assassins
arasite Eve 2
IFL GameDay 2001II7
ewind Dale120
Variords Battlecry125

We really want to stay, but it seems our time is up





















Tear it up in this total competition speed trip where you can build original machines from scratch or tweak over 130 GT sports cars that reproduce exact bandling and performance spocs. Then use your VMU to trade machines, parts and laptimes on the net. Assuming you got anything worth trading, Grandma.















IT'S THINKING



STILL BLOCKY AFTER ALL THESE YEARS

Classic Gaming Expo 2000 Old Ataris never die — they just head out to Vegas

it wasn't large, but you couldn't beat the crowd for enthusiasm. The Classic Gaming Expo 2000 was held this past luly 29-30 in Las Vegas, and for a solid 48 hours over 200 attendees immersed themselves in the games of yore. Vendors from all over the United States were there hawking their classic gaming wares, and a trip through the main ballroom was like a literal walk down memory lane. The

Atari 2600, \$200, and 7800 cartridges, as well as Colecovision, Intellivision, a two dozen classic arcade. cabinets — including several laserdisc-based titles such as Drogon's Loir, which seemed all the rage this year. Yet the Expo was a bit like

06 NextGen 10/00 www.DailyRadar.com



an onion, in that the surface hid many layers underneath. Peeling them back revealed a chance to rub shoulders with such legendary Atari-age designers as Howard Warshaw (Yor's Revenge), John Harris (Atan' Frogger, Jowbreoker), David Crane (Pitfoll, Decathion), and on the second day, the Father of

Videogames himself, Ralph Baer, who invented the original "Brown Box," a Pong and light gun combination that launched the industry Twin Galaxies also ran a high score contest for the entire Expo, while Pac-Mon champion Billy Mitchell (see NG 09/99) offered \$5,000 to anyone who could beat the

still-standing 1985 Joust record of I,537,050 - no one did. For collectors, there were numerous rare items for sale. including newly discovered, never-released games (yes, there are still more of these uncovered every year). Sword Fight and Seo Bottle surfaced (no pun intended) for Atari 2600, while Steomroller.

Power Lords, and Lord of the Dungeon finally saw the light of day for Intellivision. In addition, to celebrate the upcoming publication of her book, Supercode: A Visual Age, author Van Burnham showed off Escope From Supercode, a brand new Atari 2600 title co-designed by

Burnham and Ebivision's Eric Bacher and Igor Barzilai And, as was the case last

year, the show also boasted the Museum of Classic Games, offering a chance to gawk at incredibly rare hardware and accessories. These included the Adventurevision and Atari Game Brain, as well as oddities like a pair of mock-ups

ENews

for "His and Hers" Atari Lynxes (one with a blue plastic chassis, the other in pink - and yes, they're just as tacky as they sound) and, of course Ralph Baer's legendary "Brown Box" prototype, which, incredibly, still works. However, the buzz under all the beeps was that there may not be an Expo next year, d that perhaps a show every two years may be more practical. While attendance was actually up from the year before, fewer vendors were on the floor, and Las Vegas, while an inexpensive venue, is not as ideally located as a niche attraction like this requires. But the day before we went to press, show organizer John Hardle called to tell us the show would go on, and he intends to bring back the classics in 2001 henever and wherever the next Expo occurs, you can count on Next Generation to

be there. - Jeff Lundrigon

HIGH-SCORE HERO

Der worder who's the best at fine-floor and dip-floop floring looking at them. Big Printed (61) holds word record in Denkey Roop, Burger Time, Certipode, Me, Per-Men, and Pulmay Roop, and currentably, made the printed soon in Height Men. Denkey Roop, and currentably and the printed soon in Height Men. Denkey Roop, and find the source of the source of



MEET THE INTELLICART



The continues and the lapto is a transfer of upplies. The year Collection of the Col

M THERE'S NO PIRATES LIKE NO PIRATES

Sega Keelhauls Dreamcast Pirates

Sega was miffed when pirates July 20, Sega's actions had

Software swindlers have cracked Dreamcast, but Sega's sinking them fast

The IDSA estimates that software piracy cost American software piracy companies 53.2 billion in 1998 — compare this to total U.S. entertainment software sales of \$5.5 billion during the same period, and you'll understand the significance of this number. Thus it's no surprise that

finally cracked Dreamcast, even managing to squeeze games onto regular, lowercapacity CD-ROMs by chopping out theoretically non-critical content, such as music and dialogue. What is impressive is the vehemence with which Sega is attacking the pirates. As

Command Assessment Property of Parties Married

"Pirates are parasites that hurt this community and will not be tolerated by Sega," shat down over 60 Web sites that were offering illegal copies of Dreamcast games and boot daks for sale. Additionally, the company is working dosely with auction tiese at thook jutoo, beithe, elbay, and Amazon.com to keep illegal games off of the auction block. Over 125 auctions have been carcelled due to these efforts, and according to Segs of Americks president and COO, Peter Moons, the

company's anti-piracy efforts

will only increase.

"Sega supports a creative
community of talented
arritist," Moore explains.

"Firates are parasites that
hurt this community and will
not be tolerated by Sega. This
is just the first step in an even
bigger action the company
will undertake to stop this
problem. We will continue to
take aggressive steps to
protect our business,
consumers, and the creative

talent we have at Sega."

While it's a safe bet that your local EB or Best Buy is

pushing legitimate goods, pirated games are still quite pervasive. Legitimate Dreamcast products are always silver underneath, and should contain three tracks, the middle of which will contain the words "copyright Seea

Entertainment Ltd."
Consumers wishing to
report suspected piracy are
encouraged by Sega and
Next Gen to email any
relevant information to
stoppiracy@sega.com.
— Eric Brotcher

ews Bytes first fiscal quarter.

t was a sweltering summer for much of the country, but that didn't make for sweltering sales at game retailers. "The industry is in transition" was the most commonly

ulated mergers fell through.

Eldos is still fiving solo.

confirmations from every

Inforrames has not bought

Eidos. In fact, as of press time. News Bytes learned

that the two companies

could not agree on a price

and French glant Infogrames

has packed up its baguettes

Eidos - which is still on the

and gone home. Where

selling block - will go to now for the cash infusion it

Tony Hawk is a god, but

While the über-skater can

pull off a 900, he can't pull

streak. The big "A" issued its

Skater kept them from being as bad as they expected -

but it's still not a profit. The

Activision out of its losing

first-quarter losses, saving that sales of Tony Hawk's Pro

he's not a miracle worker.

so desperately needs is

anyone's suess.

Despite the countless

source everywhere,

avoid lawsuits (or perhaps out of good corporate citizenship), used industry phrase recently as companies announced first-quarter losses and spec-

Seea is issuing a warning with let Grind Radio, its new "skate and spray-paint" action game that Informs kids that "graffiti as an act of vandalism is a crime." The disclaimer further cautions that "violation of [vandalism] laws can result in a fine, probation, or a jail sentence." We like this approach, so let us issue a warning of our own. Do not try calling French game developers "cheese-eating surrender monkeys" at home, kids. We are trained professionals.

company lost \$5.2 million in its

sued. Who does, really? But to

Sega doesn't wanna get

Zelda.com isn't just for sapphic love anymore. Once upon a time, when kids around

the world sought information about their favorite elf and his wholesome adventures by dialing up Zelda.com, they were greeted with explicit pictures of hot girl-girl action. But Nintendo has since reclaimed the domain name and also enlisted the aid of a company called Cyveillance to try and isolate other uses of its trademarks to peddle flesh on the Web. Parents around the world are rejoicing, no longer forced to explain what "sopping wet 69" means to little Timms.

grows on trees... Microsoft sn't batting an eye at the idea of spending more than the gross national product of many world nations on marketing Xbox, Gates and co. announced in July the company will spend half a billion dollars marketing the new console. To put this in perspective, Sega spent \$300 million worldwide for Dreamcast. Of course, Sony has spent nearly \$2 billion just on facilities to build PlayStation 2. So next time someone tells you games are just for kids, you fire off those

Mattel Interactive is still swinging in the breeze. Barble Hut announced last spring that it would make every effort to unload its disastrously underperforming interactive division on the highest bidder. The response: cridget chirps and tumble weeds blowin' in the wind. As of press time, Mattel Interactive is still a part of

numbers and shut them right

Mattel. At this rate. Team Fortress 2 will be released before Mattel makes a sale. - Compiled by Aoren John Leeb Executive Producer Doll/Rodorcom

DREAMCAST ENFORCER pMax Enforces tter Control

Company: TopMax Price: \$39.99

Every now and again a new peripheral manufacturer enters the market. This year, that company is TopMax, and the fiedging hardware provider has unveiled its first oduct, the Dreamcast Enforcer — an arcade stick w low price and thorough feature set may be all the incing you need to finally take the fighting-stick plungs Not only is the unit made of durable, high-quality plastic, each of the six buttons has its own individual turbo setting The joystick has a built-in rumble feature, and there's even a cool red light on the base that matches the light on your Dreamcast console. While perhaps not quite as hip as Interact's Alloy Arcade stick, we actually preferred the feel of the Enforcer Available in either nuclear lime or deep grape, it easily matches ... well, nothing in your home (we hope). Nevertheless, it's a quality piece of hardware that will not disappoint. For ordering info, visit www.topmaxgames.com -Evan Shamoon















From the creators of GoldenEye

Death has never been faster.



The fastest first-person shooter ever made for a gaming console.



Who's keeping score?

Chalk up another victory and hang your fallen enemy on the wall. Introducing Global Rankings" your tool for tracking all your game scores, statistics, and world rankings. With FREE real-time automatic reporting you can easily desk the results when you're done playing your favorite games. Find out who has the most kills with the rocket hander or who's always camping out. Usermanaged lengues let you compete against your friends or take on a rival clan. Isn't it time you take your game to the next level?

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ONE CREDIT TO CONTINUE

Ultracade is here!

Quantum 3D puts classic gaming back in the arcade

The brainchild of Quantum 3D's David Foley, Ultracade is a different, entirely legal approach

to emulation that should keep both fans and companies happy. A standalone arcade cabinet, Ultracade houses powerful

emulation software and hardware that enable operators to customize which games are available to play on each machine — much like an old Neo Geo cabinet but not limited to any single company or era. For \$399, operators get the complete setup with the cabinet, 27-inch monitor, and the first set of games — the system will also be available in the future as a kit that can be transplanted into any JMMAcompatible cabinet. After that, they can purchase additional games on disc, which are currently grouped by company

Currently grouped by company (Capcon, juleo, hito, et al) and contain eight games each, at \$249 a pop. Each games on the CB is legally ficensed too, so while the tystem is emulated (it actually trues on a Coloreo-based Graphyte board), it's an earlierly legal outset that benefits every-body. Our test version endy had 30 games, but the system's hard drive holds up to 2000. As of this writing, over 500 games have been illcensed.

S00 games have been ilcensed. The So in effect Quantum 3D has is given arcade and bar owners a sh

venue to showcase their favorite classic games cheaply and in a high-quality cabinet. "What happens is you get a place like Gameworks or Dave and Busters. and they'll put in a few classic arcade machines, but then they run into the problem of "Hex you know, these are really hard to maintain," explains Folex "I went down to lan arcade ini Santa Cruz and it was ridiculous. You go into the classics comes, and on one machine the loystick's bad and on the other one the button sticks, so you never set a good experi-

ence on the old titles you want to play So we're trying to reverse that trend a bit."

The best thing about the system is that it's not only a great classic showcase, but it's powerful enough to emulate all but the newest games — Folly says the first is just below Model 3 level performance. So if Quantum convinces enough Recrates, you may come upon an Ultracade unit Asteroids to Street Follyter Aphon A rice bonus is, with convictes earnings and the low price of additional titles, the machines can be set to 50 cents of even a quarter a play and still allow socretors to make their innover.

back quickly.

While the system is just being rolled out now — the first 25 units were being shipped as this was written — it shouldn't be that long until you see an Ultracade in an arcade near you. Keep your eyes peeled and your quarters handy. — 8 lake Fischer

THE NEXT GENERATION TOP 10

One of the handlest features for operators is the ability to see what games have been played the most due to a handy accounting function. In the week that the Ultracade has been in the Next Generation office, here are the too 10 games we've been playing:



I. ISN2 (60 Games played, current high score of 177,480 held by



2. Commando (44)



3. Rastan (24)



4. Black Tiger (25)



S. Elevator Action (20)



0.14. 00 (10)



Z Ghosts n' Goblins (iS)



I. Gunsmoke (14)



9. Qtr (13)



IO. Bubble Bobble (II)



News

The X-philes

For whom does the doorbell toll? Microsoft delivers development kits

If you'd like to hear tales of unmatched woe and II-deserved misery simply comer a console developer and ask him or her about console development kits. Strange, circultous devices designed not so much to enable and illuminate the task of the game designer, but rather - like the puzzle box from Heliroser - to give the supplicant access to arcane horrors and years of torment. It goes without saying that these devices come with jargon attached --- in this case SDKs (Software Development Kits) are usually a

combination of hardware and software tools (but sometimes lamentably lacking one or the other) designed to emulate the functionality of a finished console, with the XDK while at the same time providing access to the subtle chicanery of its often proprietary features. Consoles are weird difficult to

program for and usually packedto-bursting with limitations rather than abilities. So leave it to Microsoft to turn it up to eleven

X Marks the Box

Yes, the X is going to be everywhere XDK stands for Xbox Development Kit, which In turn, according to Xbox General Manager J. Allard, stands for friendly ease of use, U.S. developers love working on PCs. Like the definitive American car, the PC is a bloated, inefficient monstrosty that for all its mess of engine parts, can often be fixed with a hammer. That's why they're going to like the XDK. "For people who have begun prototyping their console games on PCs," Allard

says, "Xbox is the friendliest system to move to, bar none."

But it isn't just Capitalist Yankee pig-dogs who are taking delivery of shiny new XDKs. Allard won't give specifics on which languese companies beginning with K, N, and C have gotten large boxes in the mail. But when pressed he admits, 1 can't really say other than the fact that I've been signing some very, very large FedEx expenses recently and expect to sam even more over the next couple of months," And Allard is seemingly corporation-agnostic when shipping out the goodles: "Our strategy is to get 100% behind all of our development partners that are building Xbox titles no matter their size. All of our partners

know that if they ever feel 'tast' as you put it, that they should call **Getting Under the Hood**

me and I will fix it."

It'll take a few months for the complaints if any to start rolling in. After all, those lazy corrupt developers won't even roll out of their luxury beach-hammocks until Microsoft hands them a batch of near-complete games, requiring only trite character names. As a result, bugs and



nmblems will be discovered gradually, and Microsoft will tweak the XDKs to surt. "The XDK is a little different," Allard explains, "in

that we start in phase one with a PC-based system that we will upgrade between now and early next year with parts and libraries that get closer and doser to the final feature set. Then early next year we'll offer the first fully custom hardware that is going to be featurecomplete. Phase three is final hardware next summer which will have a few minor differences than the consumer version, like more memory and a DVD emulator to give developers the best tools."

But at what cost? "We aren't discussing pricing," says Allard, "but it's competitive. Between the various hardware revisions, the tools and documentation, and the developer support. It's a really good value. Besides, you can use the same development kit for the next five years!" So Microsoft isn't giving it away but developers needn't fear being put on hold when they call the MS help line. By the time we launch," Allard promises, "we'll have more people focused on developer support than we will on the operating system,"

- Frank O'Conna

"For people who have begun prototyping their console games on PCs. Xbox is the friendliest system to move to, bar none"



II The XDK: Powering Xbox development and looking rather small



Development news as it develops

XBOX KNOWS SPORTS

CRAZY TRAIN OF GAMES





THE CORE OF PS2



Don't buy a lame game. Check it out on FirstLook.com first. FirstLook.com lets you see streaming samples of games before you buy, so you can see them in action. Log on to FirstLook.com and see it before you buy it.





Dolphin Watch

Sshh! Don't speak too loudly, Nintendo. Someone might hear you

By the time you read this, Nintendo will have at long last unveiled its nextgeneration console, currently code-named Dolphin. But as we go to press roughly two weeks before its debut at Nintendo's Space World show on Aug, 25, all we have at the moment from the company are vague promises and somewhat disappointing announcements. We have, however compiled everything they've said up to now, which, in typical Nintendo fashion,

Dolphin Ready, but Not Playable

That's right. According to Nintendo, there will in fact be no playable Dolphin software at Space World, which is, putting it mildly, a downer However the Big N° has confirmed to **Next Gen** that it will at least pull back the curtarias on the console's hardware and, presumably, controller design. Nintendo will also finally dividge Dolphin's full system specifications, including the platform's real name and

performance capabities, right down to details regarding the proprietary DVD format and overall unified RAMI. This is, of course, all well and good, but what about Dolphin software! Maybe it wouldn't be playable, but couldn't we at least catch a glampse of great things to

come? Aug. 24 is the big day

promises Nintendo of America

Executive Producer Ken Lobb, saying only, "All of you attending the pre-show announcement will be very, very happy," We hope you're right, Ken, because Nintendo can't afford not to impress the hel out of us all at this point,

The "Main" Man Speaks Nintends of America recently held its periodic Gamers Summit in Seattle, Washington to preview its fall lineup and talk about the future. Executive Vice President of Sales and Marketing Peter Main compared and contrasted Nintendo to competitors Sony, Sega, and Microsoft, and he had some encouraging words for the Dolphin faithful. He described Game Boy Advance By Advance Boy Advance as "an integral part of Dolphin" and then stressed how the friendship between handheld and home console would set Nintendo agust as a company focused solely on the videogame business. Main commented that "Polemon Stodium — which enabled Game Boy owners to limport Polemon

characters acquired from Red,

Blue, and Yellow to an N64

cartridge and use them in the corocale version — was a testing ground for the company.

Clearly there was a huge opportunity to do that, and of clearly you're going to see an interface between the Game transportance, in more than happenstrance, and doesn't require a mechanical device, and probably uses



M Matt Casamassina, the big Dolphin sleuth in the videog Industry, is the editor-in-chie

the modern and our orline capabifices," explains Main. "And having those two pieces of gear grow software — growing software on one, tracing data, raising the level of performance — will make Dolphin a very different kind of dedicated garning machine."

— Mott Cosomossino

The New Controller - Revisited

and month, beak first showed greater in early models of poliphin controller design that we had constructed based on obtaining stephene from development houses. The month we have an applicit, which we believe is considerably the controller of the other controller of the other





er (right) is an improvement over the one we ran last month (left). But how close is it to the real thing





RESISTANCE IS FUTILE

Sony's GScube Graphics performance

SIGGRAPH (Special Interest Group for Computer Graphics) to choreograph, light, and test Expo saw the first public demonstration of Sorry Computer that are very close to the fully Entertainment's new GScube - so named because it's built around the similar demonstration, using Graphics Synthesizer chip developed character animation from its for PlayStation 2. In fact, the GScube upcoming Final Fantasy movie. uses 16 GS processors in tandem Like the PlayStation 2 the

with 16 Emotion Engine CPUs. combined with 32MB of VRAM and 2GB of main memory for a restrine 3D performance of L2 billion polyrons per second, it's also capable of output at resolutions up to separate computer as a host 1920x1080 (601ps, progressive), which even exceeds HDTV standards. The unit stands as a solid cube. 19 inches on a side and weighing in at a

hefty 106 pounds (in fact, it really resembles something built by the Borg). At press time a Sony spokesperson was frank to admit that "It's so new, we haven't figured out an exact use for it yet, or a business model." But a few of Sony's GScube project partners quickly pointed out the potential of the system. it will not make you breakfast or

ran a segment from Antzi'in resitime, demonstrating how the speed of the machine enabled them animation sequences with results rendered final image. Square gave a architecture is based on, GScube is built from the ground up to work in

a broadband, networked environment. The unit is not, however, a workstation unto itself, it requires a (although it only needed a laptop to run demos), as well as a high-end henselbaned consuc (for which Come touted another partner's product, the SGI Origin). According to Sony GScube

"creates an optimal environment for the creation, manufacturing, and distribution of computer entertainment content, while charting the path towards realizing realtime generated e-onema productions."

- Jeff Lundrigen



Sony's GScube graphics station can handle even Final Fontosy characters in realti

FRONT PAGE NEWS

These artists had us covered from the start Think this month's ncer cover image of

Representatives of PDI/Dreamworks

was done by Square? again. This 3D rend

ton, a 16-year game

try veteran and one of

the founding members of iguana Studios. Matt and his team of six artists, formerly

Building a cover 3) Flat-shaded 3D model

4) With final textures added

mber of fantastic package covers for Acclaim the group now operates indently with the goal of being the leader in

ne cover art. on is to create st artwork poss on says of their

"being crea tting the job done in the best poss Considering the impeccable job Big Sesh did

videopame box cover and

well on its way. For more nation or to view re work, visit them at or contact Kirk director of sales and rowd@austin.rr.com.

marketing, at kirkwinter

for us this month, we think

the company is already









■ NO MORE EXCUSES

Learn to program, make a game, get rich

Got a game idea? Two software packages will get you up and on your way to making it yourself







The days when you could create a best-selling game by yourself in your gazage may be long gone, but there are some new tools out now that may let you come close. No, you probably won't make the next Final Fantage, but if you pick up one of these packages you can learn how to program and figure out.

what does and doesn't work when trying to make a game. This in turn will provide you with a huge leg up on the competition when you finally decide to set off your couch and join the game industry

1 look at resumes from people who want to work in games every day" says Dwital Eclose's Creative

Director and assembly language guru Mike Mike. "Having done a game, even if it isn't fully professional-level, is a major major plus. It shows you can complete projects and that you aren't just a warnabe" Mika should know A self-taught programmer, his portfolio of homogrown Amga and PC games helped him land his current job at

Dwital Echose DIV Games Studio

Like lots of "make your own game" packages, DIV Games Studio (www.div-arena.com) promises that you don't need to know how to program to get started. That's true, but "I look at resumes from people who want to

game, even if it isn't fully professional-level, is

work in games every day. Having done a

a major, major plus, It shows you can

language is tailored to games, and theriks to the clearly written menual great tutorial material, and tons of sample source code, g's surprisingly easy to get up and running. Onerally developed a few years ago in Sparish but only just coming

gut in Enrish now DIV into you make 20 DOS games. However, the system is powerful enough that you can make games that approach Super Nintendo or Amiga quality include scaling and rotation of spintes and backgrounds.

The sample sames, which come complete with source code, include a fighting game, a platformer a shooter

> The Bottom Line Programming and designing games is hard work, and while both of these programs make things easier, it still takes plenty of effort, dedication, and

and more. None of them are impressed if you made one of them the very least, DW lets you create cool demos - your games can be made into stand-alone use files - and doing so will teach you a lot about how games are made

DarkBASIC

Not satisfied with 2D? Check out DarkBASIC (www.darkbasic.com), a version of BASIC with complete support for Microsoft's 3D DirectX libraries. You'll need to know more commands than "10 Print "Blake is dumbs 20 GOED 10" to take advantage of DarkBASIC, but with tons of source code available and a growing development community, it's a great way to get started learning about 3D game-making.

Will you be able to make Quoke ill moments after Installing No. of course not. But it's surprising how fast you can ext something very cool (or at least first-generation PlayStationlookers) up and number fiven if you know nothing about programming, after reading the manual you can be making changes to the included demo software and learning about taking advantage of DirectX's 3D APIs within an hour or two

DarkBASIC's interface is also surprisingly simple, especially compared to other development pistems available on PC. The system also comes with support for sound mowes, and sontes, so it can do 2D romes almost as easily as 3D. Another nice thing about DarkBASIC is that there's a free demo version online

employers

n before he goes to maxination on your part to make a fun game. But if you've got the drive you'll find that either of these texts is a great place to start and can help you gain experience that will be valuable both to you and to potential - Chris Charla

HORE TALES OF THE HARDCORE ber 9, 1999, Dream Isunches at 5 a.m. and my best friend — let's call him "Hike"

- and I agreed to be the very

en the door and who si

ently as he was lea

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er we get our Dream

So we head to EB. We are the

st in line, and when other

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berin plaving At I p.m. i as

st we go to the hos

ding back to EB. We trade

y, at 10 a.m. the next day

in the game and get back in t

e after they fix Mike's

our Dreamcasts for one m

ken nose, we go back to

mes first, damn it.* W

tion to his being there. I

they broke up), her new

complete projects and that you aren't just a wannabe." _ Depte Enters Creates Director Man Miles

ROLL WITH IT BABY Introducing GameWheels not your average periphera

New device gives disabled gamers a real workout



Neumenhobitection and University of Pittsburgh have developed GameWheels, a device that enables wheelchair-bound patients to exercise by playing ames using their chairs.

devices have been around for years - but the application is GameWheels, designed by Rony Cooper professor and chairman at the Pitt School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, consists of a set of portable rollers onto which strapped. By pushing the wheels

PC games: Need for Speed II, iste Doom, and Powerbook Rocer. The actual control scheme and type of exercise vary depending on the game, but, for example, the faster you spin the wheels, the faster you make the car in line with previous research

with non-disabled people, the exercise is more enjoyable (and subjects tend to keep at it lorger) than on more traditional fitness machines. However, this is the first such device to address the specific fitness

needs of people confined to they could work out using their own chairs was especially pealing to those involved in

GameWheels is currently undergoing clinical trials and isn't available to the public yet Researchers hope to find a - Jeff Lundri







AVAILABLE IN FIVE ACTION COLORS: RED, BLACK, YELLOW, PURPLE AND BLUE

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Produced pader Economic by Sery Computer Estastainment America for one with the PlayStation grown console. PlayStation and PlayStation Inc.

H λ L F



Play it on Sega®Dreamcast, Fall 2000

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Half-Life features new characters, weapons, and enhanced effects specially designed to exploit the power of the Sega Dreamcast



Half-Life's incredibly advanced Al is used to fill the game with uncomfortably realistic adversaries



Intelligent characters and intense story create an experience unlike any other action game ever made

















→ Alphas

Cutting-edge games on the rampage



PlayStation 2

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Dreamcast



Nintendo 64 World Destruction League





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→ Alphas

you perform cause destruction around you. Using a bomb will destroy your enemy, but what about the city? I would like the player to think about every action he takes." So as the reluctant hero Leo (in his mech,

the Jehuty), it's your job not only to survive against fanatics who are trying to hilack the colony, but to outthink and defeat them with minimal loss of human life. The gameplay is part RPG in this respect, and emergencies and other random events will occur within the game world, and you can choose to get involved or ignore them. For example, you can ignore the attack on a nearby city and instead hunt for a powerful item for your mech, but then the city in question may be destroyed and thousands of lives may be lost. It's these moral choices that players will face, and how they react will effect how the storyline (which is still shrouded in a bit of mystery) unfolds.

While you are free to wander the world, gameplay is mostly focused on fighting enemymechs. Your goal, rather predictably is to find the location of the enemies and destroy them all before fighting off a large boss character. Players fly around with the analog stick, using a II More advanced players will be able to chain attacks together to form powerful combon

lock-on button for targeting and two buttons for fixed primary and customizable secondary weapons. A fourth button, simply called "dash," fires off huge energy-draining missile barrages at long range yet performs dazzling special moves up dose. Okamura is happy this control scheme is simple, because it will

"As you can imagine, every move you make with your robot or any attacks you perform



enable both hardcore and average players to get into the game

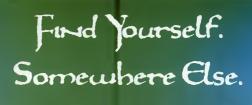
On the surface this may seem similar enough to Virtual On, but it's consciously been designed a bit differently from your standard glant-robots-in-arena-combat fare. "I don't want the player to act like they are in a standard game — you see enemies and you go destroy them," explains Okamura, "I want a player to experience the world he's entered. I uld like him to really understand what he is doing and to face these difficult choices. Protecting lives is not that simple." So even in the heat of combat you'll be forced to focus on keeping civilians alive since the environments are completely destructible. Okamura even suggests that, in some cases, you may want to try and lure your enemies outside of the populated areas before you engage them,

Besides the action and drama, the ZOE team has also been focused on getting the look of the game just right. "From the very beginning I wanted to make Japanese animation into a game," states Okamura, "I do not want the visuals and effects to be real we use 3D and special effects to recreate the animation taste." With this in mind, roughly one-third of the ZOE team is actually from the

sura and the ZOE team are a who've been able to show impressive results with \$52 hardware in a relatively short time. We sat an with Okamura and asked him what it was like to







you had the strength to crush steel and bone?
you could bend reality to your will?
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TITANIUM ANGELS

Are big guns all you need to break into the house that Lara built? According to Mobius, it depends on the guns

Just about every videogame developer with a character sporting begger than Acup breasts has foolishly exclaimed that their new heroine will beat Lara Croft at her own

eame. But the truth is that no one has even come close. While Lara may have dominated the PSX arena, though, it seems as if the PlayStation 2 has been left wide open, sending







er the player's control, so for the first time, you can fre

developers scrambling to create what could be the next big action become. One of the first candidates to make a bid for stardom is the heroine of Titanium Angels, Carmen Blake. A compelling mix of The Fifth Element's Leeloo and Blode Runner's Pris, Carmen has deliberately been designed to attract fan boys. Yet instead of pumping her up with silicone, developer Mobius has augmented Carmen with a number of hightech weapons and a tank-like horse called Titan. hoping to make her tough enough and smart enough to stand above the competition. As part of an elite intervalactic group of bounty hunters, the Titanium Angels, Carmen's lob in the game is primarily to blast a path



GAME

Is a move that is becoming more and water accounts of an exceptionate of a exceptionate of a exceptionate of a exceptionary and an exceptionary and an exceptionate of a exceptionate of a exceptionate of a exceptionate of a exception of a

through the bald and ugly in a third personbased association relicion. The game starts as Currien trights a maltime Earth-based dictation, Fine. Himige pow when her drop byte in destroyed and the must follow fine through a teleporter to a stringer and unferriting byte the teleporter to a stringer and unferriting byte the thereof time, a stringer and unferriting betternist. There she resumes the hunt and overhally betternist. Then, a time of the place of the balds (the original settine of the place), now entained by Fine. From that port Conv. entained by Fine. From that port Conv. must, altern, ride him through the various which of a multi-bytern of the private of the tright.

The game is unquestionably violent as timeperson action games ga, and subsequently the interface has been designed to capture the responses and mittine qualities of a fine person shocker. Gamers will have fill 30-degree comtool over the camers, using the mouse on PC, and an analog stok on PS2. The camers control of the company of the company of the comverse his concept soft in each of the camer, and with this concept soft in each of the camer, and when this concept soft in each of the camer control back their camers. This near been done projectly before, largues Producer their Customs.

A mix of The Fifth Element's Leeloo and Blade Runner's Pris, Carmen has been deliberately designed to attract fan boys

camera and controls. Titonium Angels will perfect the technique." A first-person sniper mode will also be available, but the size of its role has yet to be decided.

Titum enthy ust a gimmatic eithen Mounted gamen can make use of his earth elegower and brute strength to shift heavy objects and help solve puzzles. Hobbus is hoping for an almost. Quotes like paging for the gimm so both characters are endowed with a considerable armory including up to seem weapons each, with three or four levels of power-ups, it's 1000k high-tech sold-stuff till on, o laters and plasma effects will be.

bent and stretched to new levels, hopefully with original results.

R remains to be seen whether games will enthunce the said-doling Rejerce, behavior, who is rather unlike the more familiar cheaty who is rather unlike the more familiar cheaty pict, and unconfirmed possibility of internet flag-ging should be enough to saistly any gamer. Of course, Lam's outings are highly physible, and well have to wait a title longer to see if this game comes together to per join Lener sheaty block.



Quoke-like expect lots of biasting with less of an emphasis on exploration





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Microsoft



As cerebral as we gamers like to think we are, we still love to destroy excepting insight buildings, bad guys, the neighbors' lawn farmingos... So it's no surprise that we're eagerly awaiting this title, which plans to serve up a hefty portion of explosive vehicular combat with a generous side of collateral damage.

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Destruction Legisler, Thander Toels basis
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The biggest difference between this title and 3DO's previous tank combat series, Battletans, is the new focus on Individual Street Fighteresque characters with unique personalities, moves, and fighting styles — an approach remarkably similar to that of Infograms? Motor-



If Say what you will about a post-apocalyptic inture water and women may be scarce, gangs of mutants could run amok, Mel Gibson may be forced to subsist on dog food — but if you can drive a tank and blow stuff up, how bad could it bat?

Mayhem (previewed in last morith's **Next Gen**). Each type of combatant will utilize tactics specifically designed around their personalities.

Each competitor's tank is also heavily modified to suit their particular strategies



COMBATING THE CLASSICS



complete without mentioning, the Ativi state of the

For instance, Butcher Bronslo is a Canadian good of boy who drives a massive trait with a huge gon that simply pulserness his opponents had everpthing around them in contrast the more taxtically renered Shadow Watersube dresses like a range and uses her later with surgical precision, striking quarkly and their retenantly by medies into the shadows or dropping more to discourage pursuess. These thems: Gony Haldey and Alfernencing with who put wants to get done to you — and crist-fursile you into strapped come the driving had only and strain produced to get done to you — and crist-fursile you into strapped come the driving had only and strain produced to the s

Each competitor's tank is also heavily modified to suit their particular strategies. One tank can both teleport and pretend to teleport. This enables the pilot to bluff pursuers into giving up prematurely and turning their backs on the enemy. Another tank is custom-designed





for snipers, complete with a cloaking device and long-range weaponry.

In addition to these character-specific details, general battle Al will be enhanced.

Enemies will be acutely aware of their environments, knowing with mailes good cores where power-ups are located, and where attacks orignate. The sophisticated AI comes countery of the PlayStation J. bit ability to handle increasingly complex algorithms will also lead to more accurate commentary ramerous graphical effects, and better putificing.

Of course, no vehicular combat game is complete without solid multipliyer support, and WDLIT plans to satisfy lars of the classics while also pushing the emissipe, in addition to traditional destination and CET action, several new two- to four-player modes are under consideration in Ferrary players must collect flag that constantly response, while Domination is a battle for control of covere onouts that can enter either



If Thanks to advanced AI, enemy tanks will utilize a whole range of tactics, including straing, flanking, ramming, sniping, and taking cover. However, few of

hostile or friendly drone tanks, thereby creating battles that can have up to 30 smultaneous perticipants. Widespread destruction and multiplayer choos were the Battletanx games' best features, and WDE-TT looks to do nothing but immove on this foundation. — Eric Brotcher





While most of the surface is paved, the player will encounter ice, sand, and mud, as well as more dangerous terrain like molten steel and acid

Survival Horror Has Entered A Hew Realm... the K Operation Dreamcast



WIPEOUT FUSION

Racing on the cutting edge or just another remake?

The original Wipeout games brought PlayStation to the eyes of many who wouldn't normally have given Sony's little gray box a second look. With cutting-edge graphic design, techno beats, and blazing fast racing, it was a natural draw for videogame crusaders looking for the most adrenaline-packed experience on the market. Now, armed with a new console, new technology, and a fresh approach, Studio Liverpool aims to push the

more dizzying heights.

"One of the biggest tweaks we have made in Wipeout Rusion is in the handling of the craft," explains Brand Manager Enda Carey, referring to the now native 49-way analog control scheme. This improvement makes the anti-gravity vehicles much more responsive to the tracks, which means a lot less bumping and scraping around corners. "Now the crafts will actually hug the track like a roller coaster We've out a lot more down force on them to make them stick to the

futuristic super-speed racing genre to new and TOO MUCH SPEED!

track better than ever," says Carex

PlayStation 2 has also enabled the team to improve the game's draw distance tenfold. Players will now be able to gaze in awe at the horizons of more than seven different themed environments, including desert and jurgle stages. The final game will ship with three tracks per environment, each one relating to the different racing classes: Vector, Venom, and Rapier. The separate tracks will then offer varying routes depending on which speed the player opts for and will be packed with hidden areas and interactive scenery

in a return to the original concept, the pliot will now take center stage when players are choosing a race team and vehicle. Each pilot has his own set of characteristics and even







"The crafts will actually hug the track like a roller coaster. We've put a lot more down force on them to make them stick to the track better than ever."

grudges. "Some of the new pilots date right back to the original title and some are even descendants of them," Carey reveals. "An American pilot may have a grudge against a Russian pilot, and this will be built up through the same as the player tackles the different

team challenges." Not all the weapons have been looked down yet, but they will be ship- and environment-specific. We were also able to confirm that select favorites such as the appressive Quake Disquoter and the essential

Autopiot will make return appearances. The single-player game has also been expanded significantly, and players will have to run over 450 laps if they wish to beat every race in the game. "What we've done this time round is made it a much bigger game," Carey explains. There will be all the usual modes such as Time Trial, Arcade, and Tournament, but the Challenge mode has really been beefed up." In

games, will no longer be handling the design - a. new Web-based agency has been contracted to take the game forward. Of course, the futuristic feel will remain, helped along by a new direction for the music. "We're certainly not going to go players the ability to unlock their team's special down the RFA trans-anthem route," says Carex weapons if certain goals can be completed. The game will also support up to four players via

"The ongoal had a very techno-hardcore feel to it. XI. had a bit more life, and the third was chilled and trancey Make no mistake, we're some back to our roots with Fusion. The game's going to be hard, the music's going to be hard, and the

splitscreen, and there will also be plenty of multiplayer-specific tracks and weapons. The biggest shock is that Designers Republic,





- Gavin Ogden

WHEN YOU HEAR THE BELL, COME OUT FIRING!

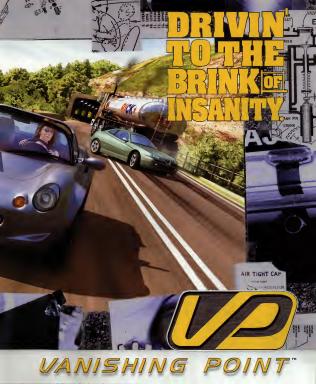






LET THE GEMES BEGIN.









HUNDRED **SWORDS**

A realtime strategy game in an arcade? It's so crazy it just might work...

Realtime strategy games have never really caught on in Japan (at least in part because almost all of them come from U.S. or European developers), but Sega is determined to conquer this undained territory in its native

land with Hundred Swords. And they're doing it in a unique way that has never been tried before: by introducing it in the arcades first. Hundred Swords should theoretically already be in lapanese arcades by the time you read



A PC version would be easy to create.... Could this mean more connecting Dreamcast players to PC players a la Quake III?

this, and Sega has linked three of its arcades (in lkebukuro, Shibuva, and Odalba) via a fiber-ootic network, creating in effect a huse, pay-perminute LAN parts: Played out entirely in 3D, the game follows most of the usual RTS conventions. There are eight leaders to choose from, each with their own strengths and weaknesses - better use of magic or the ability to produce soldiers faster for example. Up to four players can battle it out in a given territory at a time. either all against all, two on two, or (for the testosterone lunkies) three on one. You've also got resources to gather money to manage, a tech tree to follow, and support structures to build in support of your forces.

The arcade version of the game is controlled

using a variant of the standard Dreamcast pad. but for the home version coming late this year. an optional control scheme using the Dreamcast keyboard and mouse will also be available. The home version will differ from the arrade in a number of other ways as well. Only three battlefields are offered in the arcade, but the home version will offer 30, as well as a single-player Adventure mode, in which you can choose from two characters (a male and a female, though there seem to be few other noticeable differences between them). Each victory or loss will determine the path of the story, what battles you fight next, and the overall ending. Also, unlike in the arcade where battles are limited to 30 minutes of playtime, on the console network, players can compete against



m design gives everything a unique spin each other for as long as it takes

The big unknown at this time is whether or

not - as with AllenFront Online (NG 09/00) - home players will be able to compete directly against players in the arcades, Sega. recently began offering broadband connections in Japan through a cable network, so a home player using this fast connection shouldn't have any problems keeping up with those using the arcade's speedy LAN. And because the arcade machines are essentially based on PC hardware, a PC version would be extremely easy to create as well - and it would probably sell better among RTS enthusiasts when the game eventually reaches the United States, since the genre is all but unknown on console. Could this mean more of connecting Dreamcast players to PC players a la Quake IIP

In any case, Hundred Swords is certainly a unique title in Sega's lineup for later this year. We'll attempt to keep you up to date as more Information becomes known.

- Jeff Lundrigan/Christophe Kagotani





Crash & Bash your way through eight hazard-filled environments



Supercharge your vehicle with a turbo injection of high-speed energy



Play Off-Road bumper cars with split-screen head-to-head racing



Smoke your opponent in Battle Mode. One of five hair-raising modes of play





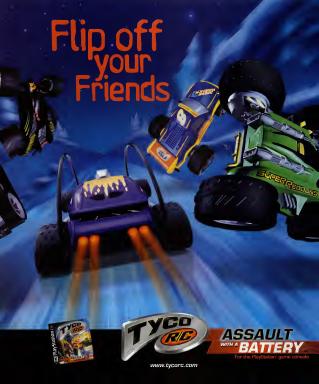








Tyco...That's How You Spell R/C"







The geographically accurate playing surface leads to some interesti at must be utilized if you want to stay on track

■ PLAYSTATION 2

G-SURFERS

nges and unique raceways. Each craft will be outfitted with special side-thrusters

Cruising Van Nuys at 7000 mph

It is difficult not to be skeptical when presented with the concept for a game that features a representation of the entirety of the planet Earth - all 2.2 trillion polygons of it - for the PlayStation 2. In light of the weak performance of software for PlayStation 2 since the console's launch in Japan, it's even harder to believe a little-known code shop in Manchester, England would be up to such a daunting task. But as is often the case, it's the smaller, hungner teams that ambitiously try to broaden the scope of gaming, and 18-monthold Blade interactive has definitely set its sights

G-Surfers, ostensibly a futuristic racing game akin to Wipeout features aircraft that hower above Earth's surface and travel at speeds up to 7000 mph over real-world locations. The basic race mode features a huge number of courses, vehicles, power-ups, and obstacles such as mines (and, of course, it's also promised that additional vehicles and

power-ups can be unlocked through diligent exploration). Managing Director Debbie lones stresses that the team has worked hard to

make sure this isn't just another futuristic racing clone. "Our chaps have taken apart every major racing game that's been done," lones









III in free-flight mode players can tour the planet, viewing landmark buildings such as London's St. Paul's Cathedral

says, "In terms of the number of times you need to brake, the number of times per secand or minute you need to brake, the incidence of corners, the incidence of bad corners... What we've tried to do is lay down a blueprint for the easy medium, and hard courses and then design those parameters around real-world data."

if it sounds ambitious, it is, and the advanced graphics engine that procedurally builds the world around you as you're flying ensures that the game will get some good hard looks. In fact, it's the geographically accurate setting that provides the most spectacular gameplay hooks.

"In one of the levels we designed in Japan,

you slam into Mount Fuji at about 4,000 mph," says lones. "That's enough to propel you a mile or so in the air, and you bounce clear over Nagoya, it's an experience. There is no other engine that will give you anything like that flexibility. And by the same token, you've got levels that dip down to street level [as you're] flying through LA*

To portray the world accurately, the team uses satellite data that enables the engine to produce a topographically sound representation of the Earth. But to represent the true planetary scale is technically impossible, so the team uses the raw data to create a footprint for the city and its representative building





→ Alphas

types. Then the engine procedurally generates

the landscape along time to the mad systems. Which do he never list the year 3000 five did every last building," confesses jones. "The mad systems that not through the others are the real road systems, and the procedural planting of buildings plants from along the road network. What we did was to take a load of accurate data— which are height points on the planet's offer the procedural planting of the plantin

Indeed, without procedural feature it would be far too peak a task to incorporate wealth accounts detail on the scale of the game. Yone fact that loveder out the other days says RRD Director Haw Wood, it is that if you exported the meth teatures and you opported the meth teatures and you opported the meth teatures and you is proceeded in the would be a blometer and a half by like the color tool of a blometer and a half or you can come up with it procedurally So we deaded on the observa route."

Objects that are placed using the engine are even given a "brinding" within allows the team to change the world over time. "Whenever you place an object, as well as decoring its position and step, this also fairly easy to give it a birthiday, so that as the clock wides forward, as you're rendering these objects you check their birthing so it it's a time. I gets bigget for example, which may be explains Lloyd. Another example, which may be more asonomate for a savect readine vaine.



"In one of the levels we designed in Japan, you slam into Mount Fuji at about 4,000 mph"

(see boxout), is a population center that can vary in size over time.

G-Surfers is undoubtedly an impressive advertisement for the technical capabilities of PlayStation 2, and it will serve as a waler-up call to developers who continue to treat the console as a mere upgrade of its 32-bit predecessor. But marers will under the title on americal american surface and an experience.

alone — and this factor is still very much a work in progress. According to Singleton, 'the latest resistion was to try and exaggerate the roller-coaster feel of it, but most people think wa've gone too fair in that chrection so we're going to have to tone it down agan."

Apparently people were actually getting a bit

— Nicel Edge

— Nicel Edge





At 2000+ mph, twists, turns, and drops are a lot nore dramatic. Luckity you have a viewing distance



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n Wwwin























If the clashing Japanese samural armies of Koel's Kessen aren't your bag rest assured PlayStation 2 has at least one other turn-based strategy game that's probably coming to the U.S. late this year. Ring of Red from Konami is set in a fantastical world in which lanan didn't sumender at the end of World War. I and was subsequently carved up into zones by the Allies, similar to what really did happen. in Germany, Many years later, the Sovietcontrolled northern part of the country has gone to war with the American-controlled southern half and the native Japanese recognize the opportunity to kick them both out.

universes, glant mechs have replaced tanks. But the designs here are more interesting than most: Mechs look as if they could have been built using WWI-era technology all treads and riveted plating, belching diesel exhaust. As with Kessen and Sega's Advanced World War, strategy is planned out turn by turn on a grid-based man, then the actions and battles are animated In full 3D.

You'll build your forces out of squark, each composed of three includual units, basing decisions on a good mix of speed, attack strength, and other such tactics, plus you'll have

Battlefield units aren't just made up of mechs, however. Every unit also includes support personnel and perhaps a few suicidally brave infantry as well.

ties - her, you've got to make the whole turnbased thing exciting some



support units like medics to heal battlefield. injuries. The game Itself seems very characterand story-driven, so you'll also have to get to know the people under your command and their accompanying strengths and weaknesses. The main characters are a pair of commanders, a man and a woman, though as of press time Ittle else was known about the story - leff Lundrigon/Christophe Kogotoni

www.next-generation.com 10/00 NextGen 51











この脅迫者達は自分達を ultra-super cool だと信じて 疑わない。彼らはその持てる カの限りを尽くし闘う。 Emperor of the Streets の名を 手に入れる為に。









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are Laboratoria d'Organ Printinoment III. D'unis historiazione de congressi di bischimate di bischimate del delle relicionato and compressi sen de property of them emperchen relicione. Sego, Dementica della Estratoria Egoposi e introvogazione i rescurranto artinolarizatata di Sego Estreprissa. Lic. Ricigita sementi Esepo di vera in menettu a salessialito scale; Demorfets alterna mer esti estanti estrimistra especie.









MOTO GP

Namco's next racer takes you off the ridge and onto the pavement

Onginally called 500 GP in the arcade, Moto GP doesn't try to be Ridge Racer with motorcycles. There are no powerslides, a bad crash can end the race, and a good lap depends a lot more on skill and knowledge of the track than just basic reflexes, it's much more like a sim than the typical Namco races.

GP gives racing buffs a head start, because the seven tracks in the game are all based around real-world locations including Suzuka. Donington, and lerez - and they look great. Other authentic details include 20 real professignal riders (each with a snapshot over their motorcycles while racing for easy identification). 12 authentic teams to race for and 32

but it's no less exhilarating.

different bikes offering varying degrees of

performance tuning Namco has already done an impressive job bringing the graphics from the Super System 23 arcade hardware to the PlayStation 2. The tracks literally fly by at a brisk 60fps in high resolution. When Next Generation set down to play a half-completed version, we were impressed by the game's fluidity and speed, but we were given slight cause for concern when we crashed. As our bike floored down the payement, the rider stuck to it as if his hands. feet, and rear-end were crazy-slued on, A Namco representative claimed that would be fixed in later versions, but other issues such as the difficulty of analog acceleration using the

SITTING DOWN ON THE JOE

barely adequate X button instead of the right analog stick plague the game at this early stage. But there's still plenty of time to iron everything out to perfection, and knowing Namco, they'll do just that - Bloke Exches



and then lean hard for a sharp turn



PLAYSTATION 2

WARRIORS OF MIGHT AND MAGIC

New team. New system. Are these warriors finally ready to come out and play?



of a 3D, hack-and-slash fantasy adventure set in the Might and Magic universe. Their last foray into the long-running series. Crusoders of Might and Magic, was great conceptually but not much fun to play (NG 03/00). Yet 3DO has assembled an entirely new team to revisit the concept for the PS2. Next Generation sat down to play the latest version with the game's directors, Howard Lehr and Joshua Cloud, and both were eager to point out that they aren't going to stumble over the same ground as their predecessors.

Apparently 3DO still believes in the idea.

"With Crusoders, I wouldn't 100% say that

we were trying to make an action game." confesses Cloud. "We tried to mishmash too much role playing and adventure and realized that it didn't work. Here the focus is action and things that you can apply actions to: more traps, more fighting, and more spelicasting." The game does take place in the same universe as Crusoders, though it features new characters and an all-new story line subsequently it was decided not to call the game Crusoders 2. In Wornors, you play Aleron, who's unjustly accused of necromancy condemned to wear a dark mask that's marically sealed to his head, and left to die in the



"If something new and cool doesn't happen to me every 20 seconds, something's wrong."

Pit of the Accused (no relation to the Pit of Despair). This is where you begin the game, and after escaping you'll need to seek out a involves gods, monsters, betrayals, and, of course, the destruction of everyone in the land of Ardon.



that the bulk of the gameplay is heavy on

free-roaming, weapons-based action. With this in mind, the control has been kept as straightforward as possible. In fact, according to Lehr, combat is already "very uncomplicated and getting less and less so as we keep working on it." Players have access to buttons for sword swings, magic, jumping, ducking, and the invaluable lock-on camera, while the left stick controls your movement and the right stick controls the camera. (You don't need to use it because the camera will always follow behind your character," says Lehr But, he continues, "fou'll always have mouse-look if you want.")

While the shortage of actual fighting buttons might imply rather simple beat-'em-up





different weapon fighting styles and enemy Al types. A two-handed sword, for example, might be good at cutting through a horde of enemies swarming you, but it's not the kind of thing you want in close hand-to-hand combat or against long-range spellcasters. There are more than 40 monsters in the game, and they vary wildly. Players will need to adopt different fighting strategies (as well as armor and weapons) to defeat creatures ranging from

"The focus is action and things that you can apply actions to: more traps, more fighting, and more spellcasting,"

swarms of knee-high annovances to a frebreathing dragon ten times your size.

"If something new and cool doesn't happen to me every 20 seconds, something's wrong," says Lehr regarding the variety of gameplay.

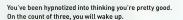
"That can be a monster I haven't fought before, or maybe it's a puzzle that involves fint and a stick of wood and starting a fire. I want

constant variety." To maintain this level of diversity, the team is planning up to 12 major quests as well as a number of optional subquests. During the course of these quests, you'll not only discover new items and magic but also a good deal of the game's backstory. While Cloud was keen to emphasize the fact that the game will deliver more action than any other Might and Magic title, he surprisingly still promises it will provide "more information about the background of the Might and Mogic universe than has ever been given before."

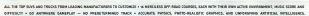
It is an ambitious plan, and seeing as the team intends to make it to the shelf with Wornors by the end of this year, success may come at the expense of the social lives of many team members. While parts of the game are already up and running - at a nifty 60fps, no less - it will still be a race to ensure the remaining content can be completed and polished by the end of a mere II months of development. Rushing a title is never a good thing, but then again, a little heat and pressure can produce diamonds. - Bloke Fischer







You are no stranger to single-player mode racing. You are King of the Road. You are way out of your element. Introducing 4x4 Evolution, the first game with internet connectivity for heavy-duty off-road competitions between Sega Dreamcast, PC and Mac users simultaneously. Because racing alone is like having sex by yourself.





















Scream. Howl. Heckle. The voice, man's primal form of communication, will once again revolutionize the way battles are won. With SideWinder® Game Voice you'll talk to and hear your squad without losing a step in an online firefight. Set up six different channels so you can plot with your teammates. Or broadcast abuse across the entire warzone. Taunt 'em, Scare 'em out of hiding. Because with the power of speech, your team's more like a real squadfecusing on the hunt and kill. Instead of the hunt and peck.

DEWINDE

Milestones

Next Generation's monthly update on tomorrow's games







This boardercross title has come a long way since we first looked at this past spring for our May issue And unless something awful happens in final QA, this is going to be an absolute must-have for every PlayStation 2 owner. The sensation of speed is dialed in, the stunts are tight, the control is solid - even the music is great. The graphics have also improved tremendously. Boarders are smoothly animated even when stringing moves together, and the Hydro Thunder/Wipeoutinspired courses feature retina-overloading color palettes and an endless number of alternate routes. To too it all off, this all blasts along at a smooth, decidedly non-jagged 60fps.

GRANDIA II

■ Publisher Ubil Soft ■ Developer Gam ■ Release Ditte: December

This long-awards this may finally give the Dreamact in RRG that can compare to Square's epic efforts. Rich, beautiful 3D graphics combine with a compelling storyline, dozens of memorable Chiracters, and a deep, engaging battle system over the course of 50-70 hours of estimated gameplay.



il The game retains its predecessor's dever battle system; the charge time before you can act hinges upon on the action was wish to take



CONQUEST: FRONTIER WARS

The extra point of 30 Rts james in oncerpoints, but when the brothers received a set string in the producer's chars, we apparted to the compared space-based once yet attended to the compared space-based once 25 to Ministry and the string secondary enquisites to place on building bases, martisting requisites in placed on building bases, martisting requisites participations, and the use of Feet Advants, who can supply ministry, and the use of Feet Advants, who can supply ministry and the strength of the str



A major part of the game is contructing platforms around your slanets. They are the critical component of your supply lines and letersitive strategy

GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO

■ Publisher Digital Mayhem/Interplay ■ Diveloper Planet Moon Studios











If the value style of the size does dottengely remark to a 50% gene, it's probably horizon exclosely filter of them and to of most of forthy original AOC team. We originally presented that the filt of 6498 (and sign) in this fugarity (areas) that size in the "C filteral, and what both the environments and Andy Action Conjuging both with cancer, which is now fortunate, in remission. We consort procedure of probably building in remission. We consort procedure of probably building in remission. We also that the control filteral three-presents souther fails or the remission from the strategy filter and more like a three-presents souther fails or the remission from the strategy filter and more like a three-presents souther fails or the remission from the strategy filter and more like a filteral present souther fails or the remission from the strategy filter and more like a filteral present souther fails or the remission from the strategy filteral groups and more filteral filteral present souther fails or the remission from the strategy filteral groups and or design filteral filteral present souther fails of the strategy filteral groups and or design filteral f



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Landard Ed.: 549 00 / Granerwa Ed.: 5199 00 dar? Colored Egito, Allo: 1024 X 768 levide



Combat monstrous enemies with an optimized real-time battle system.



Horritying CG cinemas and sharper graphics bring the shocking new storyline to lite.



Upgrade and customize your weapons and armor to take on new toes.



Use powerful new Parasite Energy abilities to attack the new Neo Mitochondrion Creatures.







SOUVE SOFT

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Aya Brea is back on the job. The Neo Mitochondrion Creature infestation has resurfaced and has taken a sinister twist. The outcome of this battle will determine earth's dominant species.



→ Milestones







sephone, Stratos, Pyro,



The state of the s

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2











The models look like they're sporting a few more polys this time around, correcting one of the few criticisms leveled at the DC next of the original THPS

Although the original has only just annoted for DC, work on a port of the sequel (previewed for PSX in NG 06/00) is already well underway White everyone is justifiably excited about new areas (ties Vertura's Scale Street,). If correlable is failers from more than before, not counting hidden characters), and plerty of new tricks, the enty thing you truly need to know is that now you can build your most latter park with a park extort Very cook.

■ PLAYSTATION, DREAMCAST, PC TOMB RAIDER: CHRONICLES







It seems as if The Lost Revelotion wasn't exactly true and, while Lara is still presumed dead, players can now relive some of her past adventures as people at her wake reminisce about Lara and her escapades. Areas you explore vary wildly from a tropical island to a Siberian base, and of course there are some new abilities like tightrope walking,

DEEP SPACE NINE: THE FALLEN







but this actually looks like a decent thirdperson action/adventure (from Simon & Schuster, no less, Who knew?). Using an enhanced Unreol Tournoment engine, the game lets you choose from three characters (the balanced Captain Sisko, the nimble Major Kira, and everyone's favorite ass-kicking, Deanna. Trol-loving Klingon Commander Worf) with a dozen different weapons. Built around established DS9 mythology, the plot centers on the recovery of three sacred Pah orbs and eventually introduces a powerful new race, the incredbly regenerative Grigari.

PlayStation₂

ROCKSTARGAMES.COM



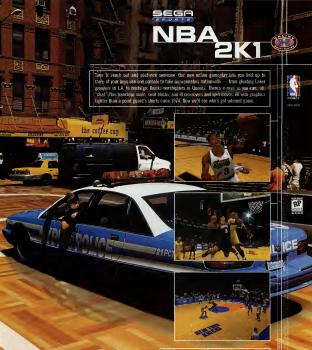






RELEASE DATE: PlayStation 2 Launch



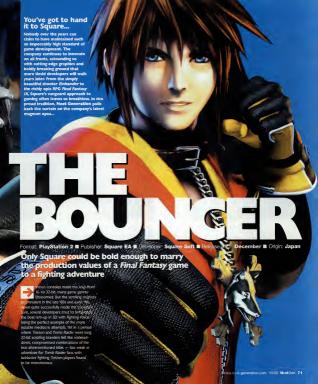


Dreamcast 🗐











But now games are entering a new era, powered by seemingly limites graphics chips and emotion engines. Once again, the cid rules no longer apply, so how is Square going to bring a new dynamic to this dying genre? Their approach is simple: Build it in 3D with never-before-seen levels of character detail, and drive it with a compelling story interspersed with the kinds of effects seen in a big-budget action movie.

Sounds great — but the Bouncer's story certainly sn't new.
"Basically the story is 'go save the Princess," says Square's localization specialist, Nobby Matsuo. "She's kidnapped for unknown reasons

says Square's localization specialist, Nobby Matsuo. 'She's kidnapped for unknown reasons by this big corporation, and then these three guys have to go in and save her. As they go in to save her, they run into a lot of situations that shed light. "Street Fighter II, Virtua Fighter, and Tekken were all popular in Japan at one time. But without a revolutionary system, they are a dying breed"

on why they want her and why she's so important to this corporation."

The game is set in the near fature, where its main character folior (pronounced sea-on) works as (can you guess?) a bouncer at a bar called files. When one of the bar's Sanonia patrons, Dominique, is abducted by agents of the Hisado corporation, Sion and this two fellow documen, volt and Klou, join forces to save her. While resour insidors like this one have been the impetus for amost every

scrolling beat-'em-up we've seen, the similarities end there.

As the three characters desperately make their way through the urban jurgle and into the Misado headquarters, the obstacles they encounter — coupled with unprecedented detail in the surrounding environments — leave us with an impression of the Bouncer more reminiscent of the 1979 gaignaf film the Warriors than Streets of Raye for Genests. "You start at the buth "Mature says of the











player's journey, "and you go to the train station. You also have a train battle, and the rest pretty much takes place within the Mikado corporation, and within the corporation there are areas such as laboratories and warehouses." in the course of the game - which consists of a total of nine stages - players will face off against numerous enemies built from 12 different model types, though some models will be used several times dressed in different uniforms. And not every enemy will be human.

"I guarantee you'll run into non-human elements." Matsuo Intimates, "not just organic or bionically enhanced, but robotic," Ultimately players will confront boss characters, including the kidnapper Mugetsu and

Mikado's devilishly sexy Echidna, But players will confront other NPCs too, including the person who taught Sion the martial arts. Yet if you've already assumed that the

Bouncer features a cooperative multiplayer mode, you'd be completely wrong. The game offers a Versus mode, but its Story mode has been designed as a single-player experience.

Before each battle in the Story mode, players will select one of the three heroes while the Al takes control of the other two and assists you. According to Square, different paths in the Story mode will unlock different characters. which goes the same for the Versus mode. The game's producer Takashi Tokita, told us at E3 that he doesn't think the Story mode will take

sed, and PS2's powerful lig

The opening bar fight takes place on multiple levels. It's w





too long to play through but offers plenty of replayability through the multiple paths, and depending on how well players do, they can receive any of several endings. Also, the game enables players to customize their characters. and at certain points they'll be able to choose special moves that do more damage.

Next Generation was invited into Square's



conference room to watch some combat test footage (seen here in the larger screenshots), and we very impressed with the modeling and animation "There are two types of models for the

main characters: one for close-ups and for facial animation," Tokita explains. "The other is a middle model used for gameplay." To give you an idea of the kind of perform-

ance Square has extracted from PlayStation 2. Tokita reveals that Sion's gameplay model consists of approximately 3000 triangles, but his high-poly cut-scene model consists of 6700 triangles, of which 1700 triangles form his face. And like Tekken Tag Tournament characters freed from their z-axis bonds, the three main characters moved freely through spacious 3D environments, unleashing numerous fighting moves on Mikado forces.

Most of the demo was set in the game's





HE TALENTED

















opening bur noom, where neon signs and is very mailstic-boling Warlizer Julgebox cast a despite of the common service of the common service of atmosphere. Other atmosphere of the common service depth-of-field camera work and motton blur on the character. Net this among possible of properties of the common service of properties of the common service of properties of the common service of properties properti

"These characters are very realistic," says Tokita. "They don't look like characters from comic books. We want to avoid cartoon-like movements seen in Dragonhall if we gave them a movement where a fireball is shot from their mouth, that really doesn't work."

is it realistic enough to include realtime damage modeling on the characters? "No, we couldn't do that," says a chucking Tokita. "Because if we did, their whole bodies would be black and blue!"

would be back and bute. This short if joi of combat inspired a number of other questions. How does the blooking system word? Can the characters use weapons? Tolkita Kindy declined to answer them at this point, possibly because the gameplay was only just coming into place. Little incertify the team has been foused on developing the characters and cut scores first. Why? The designers believe that by orading a life for these characters first, they'd then by better suited to blood out unique gempoly better suited to blood out unique gempoly.











NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN

When the pit gets beimposed, Kin pin the pays to that to the streets and review her — something with only seen in about 3 street passes, Bit C pitch are more passed to ask to the part of the compact passed being passed but the passes of the

that reflects the characters' personalities.

In fact, Square's production process for this title is more akin to the way Disney creates its animated films than traditional game development. Square started the process by recording the voiceover and videotaping the voice actors to assist their team when it came time to animate the facial expressions in the models: — which is something Disney has

done for years.

"The voiceovers are also very important to us," says Square Product Munager Kenji Mimura, "because this is the first PlayStation 2 game that will have full voiceover over CGanimated movel footage."

The game features a very impressive CGrendered intro, and throughout the game the player will be treated to full dialog with many in-game cut scenes. The voice work was actually done in English first, by Zero Linnit in japan (who were also responsible for the English versions of the arime firms Ninja Scroil and Ghost in the Shelb.

To get the cast right for the Bouncer, the team listened to more than 200 tapes and ultimately decided on 12 main character voices, although if you include the minor characters, the total is more than 20.

Like master craftsmen, Square will weave the cinematic story in and out the gameplay revealing more and more about the characters as the game progresses.

"Whatever character you use the most," asys Matsuo, "you'll get the most details on. With Ston, you'll learn he has a dark past. He loses his griffhend in an accident, which cause him to be more introverted. You'll learn about the death of his gliffhend and how that actually ties into the ston?"

Tying a cinematic story to a fighting game isn't an easy task. Will it get audiences excited, and how will jash react to this? We asked Tokita if he thought fighting games were still popular in Japan.

"As you may all know," he responds, "Street Fighter II, Virtua Fighter, and Tekken were all popular in Japan at one time. But without a revolutionary system, they are a dying breed. In the Bouncer, with the 3D system, I promise that a new type of fighting action element can be enloyed."

As more fighting gameplay is incorporated, we'll see if lideta is right. Whether or not the game is a smalling aucest, Square is to be commended for its brave rethinking of the production process. Should it succeed in breathing new life into this stalled-out genra, the Bouncer could quickly become the hottest total for the Stylation? — "Tom Russo



If you consider Japan's launch games as the first generation of PS: this title's elaborate architecture sets the standard for the second













BROADBAND GAMING

A brave new approach for online games — or the same old route, only faster?

How will broadband really enhance our gaming experience? In this investigative report, **Next Generation** blows away the smoke, smashes the mirrors, and kicks the ass of the man behind the curtain to bring you answers



will bring to our communications infrastructure. Executably in mean more stuff going faster over the internet. But on a more ambitious level, when companies use the word "brasidiand," they're taking about a sweeping revolution. What will this revolution do for graning? Will it change the gomes we play, the way we play them, and the way we est them?



Unfortunately, the answers to these questions aren't always clear, and they vary depending on who's talking, Many game companies have a vested interest in portraving broadband as an imminent widespread change. This is particularly the case with Sony and Microsoft, who are building broadband connectivity into their respective next-generation consoles, PlayStation 2 and Xbox, But even the most optimistic analysts admit that over the next five years, most consumers will still use dial-up connections to access the Internet (see sidebar), Game companies providing content and hardware for broadband connections are building on foundations that don't exist yet. Their predictions that broadband is fust around the

corner are equal parts wishful thinking and Riders on the Fat Pine

proselytizing.

Even though broadband may not be mainstream any time soon, there's no denying that it is a significant motivating force for game developers. Thirty-five percent of the



I think you're going to see (broadbandspecific games) in the next 12 to 18 months, It's a commercially viable

opportunity right now



How Fast Will Broadband Grow? We spoke with three technology research groups who make it their business to predict these things. The current number of households that access the internet with broadband connections is somewhere around two million. The rate of growth over the next three years depends on whom you ask.

By the end of this year

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By the end of 2003 Yeekse Group -

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> 16.6 million boots 15,3 million househ 22 millos bouesholds

One thing on which all three organizations agree, however, is that and will continue to serve a minority of consumers. "Dialup is for now and for the foreseeable future the means of accessing the Internet in the U.S.," says Michael Goodman, a senior analyst with the Yankee Group. Among the many obstacles to broadband are the technological and geographic limitati prohibitive pricing that doesn't look like it will fall below \$40 a th, and a lack of uniquely broadband content and app tions. For instance, email access was the equivalent of a "killer app" that drove people to get dial-up connections to the Internet Currently, there's nothing like that to drive people to broa connections, although Sony and Microsoft are striving mightly to assume that role with their console systems. The most optimistic ction is that by 2003, one-third of all households connected to the internet will do so via broadband. But even then, the other two-thirds make up a pretty substantial majority.

people playing Everquest do so via broadband connections, according to Verant CEO Kelly Flock, and he says that broadband-specific games aren't far off. "I think you're going to see those in the next 12 to 18 months," he says. "It's a commercially viable opportunity right now. .. There's enough of an installed base with a

high interest in gaming to support a commercial endeavor? But what will such an endeavor look

like? When we asked people in the industry the pictures painted weren't exactly revolutionary. "We're really talking not so much about the dynamic of multiplayer gaming but the delivery method," says Sony Online Entertainment's Scott McDaniel, "Obviously, you can push more content down the pipe, better frame rates, better resolution, voice, video, etc. With Everquest, broadband will allow us to pump more actual info without worrying about lag, but I don't see it dynamically changing the actual game the consumer plays." He suggests that broadband would also allow things like video seyments on Sony's Station.com

online gaming service, "We could use it for our Jeopardy franchise. Imagine getting the question 'What video was Courteney Cox in?" Well, with broadband, we could actually show you a clip of the video instead and ask, What actress got her start in this video?" This hardly sounds like the stuff of a revolution.

For a few more glimpses available of what we might expect, take a recent announcement from Square. The masterminds behind the Final Fantasy series will launch PlayOnline this winter in Japan to support the multiplayer aspect of Final Fantasy X and XI for the PlayStation 2, Final Fantasy XI appears to be a multiplayer only game that could be the console equivalent of Everouest PlayOnline will be a global service with localized interfaces for

different countries. Square EA President Jun lwasaki, the man responsible for the service in the United States, explains that Square sees the internet as a unique platform unto itself and plans to offer its PlayOnline service to gamers with dial-up or broadband connections. At the Square



Millennium event held in January, the company announced it was developing a realtime text translation function that will enable people of different languages to communicate.

Other developers suggest broadband will enable realtime voice communications that are not only quicker but clearer. Without having to be squeezed through a harsh compression routine to save bandwidth, voices will sound better Conversations with multiple speakers who can all be heard simultaneously will be much easier to support over a broadband connection.

Pipe Dreams Some of the people we talked with speak in much more grandiose terms when discussing the impact of broadband. Phil Harrison, vice president of Sony Computer Entertainment's Research and Development, has become a sort of evanvelist for broadband ever since Sony CEO Nobuyuki Idei announced at last year's investors meeting that Sony was essentially restructuring itself around broadband connectivity. Oddly enough, the PlayStation 2 will not ship with a broadband connection: it will be available as an add-on after its release in the United States. But this doesn't stop Harrison from talking about the PS2's broadband support with phrases like "change the paradigm of the software experience," "a complete shift in the way



What we're endeavoring to do is make it as simple as switching on TV.

you consume entertainment," "reinvents the entertainment experience," and "a new world of computer entertainment that isn't available any other way."

But when asked for examples of what this new broadband paradigm would look like in gaming, he deflects the question. Instead, Harrison talks in broad strokes: about ease of use ("What we're endeavoring to do is make it as simple as switching on TV"), widespread appeal ("The future of the platform will be determined by how far and how broad we can take the product offering"), and family-oriented entertainment ("The family and parlor games that you see on the PC are going to be much more appropriate in the living room, around the TV with the

whole family"). A popular theme among Sony folks is the PlayStation 2's support for digital video connections. Harrison suggests





we'll have a hundred thousand Blair Witch Projects uploaded to the Internet by budding filmmakers using the PS2's "3D special effects capabilities to create some fantastic digital effects for [their] movie masterpieces," Patrick Kearney, the director of broadband productions at Sony Pictures Digital Entertainment, paints a picture of grandma setting up hypothetical "video mail" to see her grandchildren open their presents on Christmas morning. It may be

very cyber-Norman Rockwell. but what will it do for gaming? The lack of specifics makes us wonder whether this talk of broadband has much relevance for gamers or if it's just part of Sony's way to convince the mass market that the PlayStation 2 is the be-all and endall of home entertainment. We wonder the same thing talking to Harrison's counterparts at Microsoft working on the Xbox. which unlike PlayStation 2 will ship with a broadband hook-up in the box. We asked Xbox General Manager I. Allard what effect broadband will have on the kinds of games we play "Where [broadband] comes into play is more around what I call episodic content," he says, "where you can have a game's value and content grow beyond the retail purchase. You go to a store, you buy a driving game, and it comes with eight tracks and six cars. You could earn a seventh car that's available only on the Web. A new track might be released. The worldwide statistics for that racing league get down-

loaded every night and stored on your

system." Allard doesn't mention that in this

modern connection, only at a slower pace.

situation broadband is just added speed;

you could do all this with a conventional



Both Allard and Harrison downniay dial-up connections Allard explains Microsoft's decision to throw its lot in with broadband by highlighting the comparative speed of broadband connections to dial-up moderns. "We could have made the compromise and said, 'Gee, for the next two years a lot of people are still going to want to use dial-up modems." We could have hedged our bets and bet on today's technology but instead we bet on the future and we made a no-compromises choice to say 100-megabit networking is far more interesting than 56k networking as our default," Harrison implies that a dial-up modern just isn't compelling enough for the PlayStation 2.

"We feel that the kind of rich media. entertainment experience," Harrison



Where [broadband] comes into play is more around what I call enisodic content.

- I. Allerd, Thes general manages



that's not our main strategic focus." However, dial-up moderns will be available as add-ons for both the PlayStation 2 and the Xbox, which makes us wonder how integral broadband will be if these systems will also work with 56k connections. Sega's strategy is the polar opposite of

Microsoft's and Sony's, "If my competitors continue to alienate their consumers. I'm really happy," says Charles Belifield, Sega's director of communications, who points

out that well over 90% of all households connected to the Internet use dial-up modems, "Sega is implementing a narrowband strategy with "Until hmadband becomes mainstream.

an intention to upgrade to broadband as it becomes more widespread," Belifield says. which many analysts say is five years away. at least, we've got to think primarily about our narrowband customers." But someone will have to lead the way

to mainstream adoption, and Verant's Kelly Flock sees gamers doing it. "A lot of tech adoption," he says, "particularly in the PC arena, has been by the dedicated gaming audience. You would not have 3D-accelerated graphics as a standard in your PC now if not for the saming community. You wouldn't have sound cards and speakers You wouldn't have this tremendous number of innovations driven by the early adopters, who tend to be heavily focused towards the entertainment side of it. In every instance where you're seeing the garning audience adopt technologies that are ahead of the curve, you eventually see that become incredibly widespread."

How Do You Want to Play Today?

But as Flock points out, this has been the paradigm in the PC arena. Whether this will work with consoles remains to be seen. For broadband console gaming to take off, won't console games have to become more like PC games? Multiplayer garning on consoles has always been a shoulder-to-shoulder affair, with a few

people sitting on a couch in front of the TV. PCs, on the other hand, lend themselves more readily to networking environments, where everyone plays on their own computers. But when

What is Broadband?

band is a term that enco es several different types of digital ections to the Internet. The most non is the cable modern, which accounts for about three-quarters of the broadband connections in the United States, Cable modems use your cable line to connect you to the Internet through a server located at your cable company. The second most mmon type of broadband connection is the digital subscriber line (DSL), which piggybacks a digital channel through your phone lines. The drawback of DSL is that your connecmiles of a special hub set up by your phone company



The biggest contribution broadband akes to communications and gaming at it sends signals faster. This is ly because a broadband connecminates a dial-up mode ne-consuming process of modulatand demodulating infor dems have to translate a di mal into an analog signal (m tion), send it across a phone line to another modern that translates the analog signal back to digital (dem lation), and then receive a reply that goes through the same process over aln. By cutting this step out of the ocess, a broadband connection shaves off more than 100 precious milliseconds, reducing the lag time caused by analog translat Broadband connections are also wider, meaning they can accor date more data on the same channel;

hence the phrase "fat pipe,"



becomes mainstream. which many analysts say is five years away. at least, we've got to think primarily about

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Microsoft's Allard explains why he thinks this model will work for consoles, he doesn't describe anything consoles gamers don't already get when they're next to each other in the same room. "Network gaming offers a much richer dynamic," he says, "it's much more interesting for people to play against intelligent human opponents rather than well crafted Al opponents. It brings the social dynamic of gaming to the next level. it's really our belief that five years from now, people are going to feel the same way about network gameplay that they feel about network computing that it's a necessary part of the experience and If you're not connected, it's not fun."

Traditionally, the most popular multiplayer console games have been fighting games and sports games that share the same screen or splitscreen driving games. With the exception of Rare's GoldenEye, the firstperson shooters that are a staple of PC multiplayer gaming haven't taken hold on

consoles. Will console ramers play the same games they've always played in a networked environment? Will they play the first-person shooters and realtime strategy games that are popular on PC? In all likelihood, we'll see modified versions of these genres retooled to work better on consoles. But one thing is clear: four players

splitting one screen isn't likely to be missed Yet the question still remains: How crucial is broadband connection to all of this? According to EA.com Vice President of Marketing and Sales Mark Blecher, high-end, multiplayer console gaming just isn't going to be possible with a dial-up connection. "I don't know," says Blecher, "how Sepa plans to make the Dreamcast games happen in

At E3, we had NFL2K1 online. running at 60 frames per

second, playing on the Internet.... We have content here and now working on a narrowband environment

Sega's Bellfield, however is quick to point out what the Dreamcast can already do: *At E3, we had NPL2K/ online, running at 60 frames per second, playing on the Internet... We have content here and now working on a narrowband environment." But there are indications that some nextgeneration titles won't support narrowband connections. Epic's Unreal Tournament for the PlayStation 2 will not support multiplayer games across the add-on modern. Once it's been patched, however, it will support multiplayer games using the system's broadband connection.

A patched console title? The PlayStation 2 version of Library Tournament will not support the broadband connection when it hits the shelves, because the connection is an add-on that won't be available until after



the game is finished. This means Epic will have to patch the game after its release. This is another way that broadband connections will indirectly affect console games; devel opers will have a link to the consumer after retail purchase. Since the PlayStation 2 and Xbox will have hard drives with their broadband connections, games can be modified or expanded after their release. which soes back to Allard's concept of episodic content, whereby developers can offer new features to be downloaded. Sony's Harrison describes the same concept as "hybrid content." "You go and buy a game from your retailer," he says, "and there are ways you can extend and expand that experience via network connectivity." But he notes that you don't necessarily need a broadband connection for this. "You either need a fat pipe or a lot of

The Broadband Shopping Cart

time," he says.

The ability to downout game modifications has always been present on PCs, but with the extra handwidth of broadband; it has wider implications, frankaps one of the most controversial aspects of broadband gaming dosern them extro to do with pulying games but with the way you get your games. By taken which had work to be provided as the property of t

I don't know how Sega plans to make the Dreamcast games happen in the narrowhand. Each of these companies is accomplishing the same thing — giving consumers a broadband alternative to driving to the store to buy a game — but with a slightly different approach. Media Station simply offers a direct downlead onto your hard

offers a direct download onto your hard drive. You buy a game and install it from their server rather than from a CD-ROM. But into Networks streams the game from their server while you play it, essentally tricking your compuster-

into thinking the game is installed Yummy.com does the same thing, but without into's geographic limitations. "If your pipe is big enough, you can play us," says Yummycom Chief Technology Officer Brody Desimone, These companies will charge flat monthly fees in the neighborhood of \$10 for access to most of their games, but certain premium titles will only be available only on a rental model at \$3 to \$4 for two days of play Stream Theory. however is a straight shot to the actual game publishers: rather than serving as a middleman for selling older titles, Stream Theory is positioning its technology as a RealPlayer-style front end to download a game directly from the publisher.

game directly from the publisher: "We've become what VCRs were to the movie business," says into Networks Director of Strateric Development Colin Nathrews. Twenty years ago. Indicion Picture Association of America President Jack Valient was banging his fist on the table spring video would fill the move business. Not surfaced it really grew the business. Not next movies you normally never would have seen. We think the same thing will happen for game publishers. A game will pup in retait, they'll make their retail dollars, and then it will go to online distribution."

then it will go to online distribution." Digital distribution as a sort of online bargain bir? This image is reinforced by the fact that publishers seem reluctant to offer other than publishers seem reluctant to offer others the inclination is to continue to work with our retail partners with the new retails, are that the new retails partners with the new reteases," say a last Tomasett, don't not not broadbard as ownering to supplied the continue of the con

However, Yurmproom seems to have an ace up the's seew, calaring that one publisher has promised to give them one of this year's hollay releases on the same day it's launched at retail stores, However, they weren't able to disclose what star title was yet, As these services are being rolled out, the company is still in neglectains with many publishers and couldn't say too much about which titles will be available about which titles will be available.





However, the company has secured deals with Activision, infogrames, and Eldos, and titles in Yummy's rollout include *Tomb*

AADBAND GAMING

Raider 3, Commandos, and Batriezone II.
We were intrigued to find the latest add-on for RollerCoaster Tycona evaluation from Isto Newtons. Perhaps expansion packs, which generally don't perform very well on the retail shelves, will find new life with digital distribution. But find new life with digital distribution, but find new life with digital distribution. But that retail is still an important factor.

You're still going to want to have that retail shelf space presence as a marketing avenue and as a convenient means of distribution and as value added. We could have made the [Evernuest expansion] Ruins of Kunark available as a download, but clearly people want to have the new package. They want to have the poster. They want to have the tchotchkes that are included in that. There's a certain feel you get when you actually have the box in your possession." Hashro's Tomasetti ako points out that some games aren't necessarily well suited for online distribution. "Some games you just have to have a manual," she says, "fou look at Grand Prix 3, for instance, and you really need that 80-page manual." Many digital distributors are making manuals available as



They want to have the noster. They want to have the tchotchkes that are included in that. There's a certain feel you get when you actually have the box in your

possession.

be seen whether consumers accept this as a substitute.

Let the Games Begin

The most encouraging development in this alternative to retail is that it may eventually loosen the retail stranglehold on game development. Mark Surfas, president of GameSox a free multiplayer interface that supports most multiplayer PC games, thinks we'll see more variety as this model rains acceptance. "Many game developers and publishers will be able to return to the roots of computer samine the development of smaller-sized games that are easily distributable," he says, "In today's environment, the availability of shelf space at the same retailer often determines whether a game can achieve any success. This really limits what the gaming audience gets exposed to. Smaller bite-sized, less costly games don't stand a chance. When games can sell well via online distribution, we'll see more game variety."

World Entertainment Broadcasting Corporation, or WEB Corp, is an example of how this might work, although they're fully aware that they have to support narrowband connections to reach the widest Ing application grames based on the shareware model: the first level will be five, and then there will be a charge of around \$5 for each additional level or chapper. WEBS jim Perkins is builted, to say the least, on this model of distribution, "% to ging the least, on this model of distribution, "% to ging to the death of retail, once and for all, in terms of getting interactive entertainment," but diagnoses, predicting that it will all be ornine in two to three years." I think broadband is just going to be the final nail in the coffin."

The Fat Pipe Smoketh At this point, the only concrete evidence

we have that broadband technology is changing saming comes from the companies developing online distribution methods— hardy a revolution in the way we sixually play games. Stall (Fleet) floot, is cally take advantage of broadband technology could come as soon as a year from low. Next Generation is of the firm belief that people are working on broadband-specific games, but getting those involved to talk about them is another matter for example, we alseed frocktart Games to method the coursely we alse forcidant of came to method the coursely we alse forcidant Games to method the coursely we alse for the coursely we alse forcidant Games to method the coursely we also the coursely we have the coursely we also the coursely we also

Pixel Broadband studios.

"We've not taking about it just yet," says
Rockstar CEO Terry Donovan, "as we would
prefer to maintain our competitive
advantage. We'd rather have something real
to show you first." (interestingly, Sony's Phil
Harrison happens to sit on the board of
Pixel Remarkand studios.)

There's also been a lot of hushed talked at LucacArts about Star Wars masshely multiplayer online game, being codeveloped flock's own Verant and scheduled for release next year Will it be broadband-only! LucacArts is officially not clausaring the project until it is further along in development. Seeing as the representables from the

companies responsible for pleasing hardcore gamen have almost youn to a mutual code of silence, we'll leave the list words to Robert Harris. As love president of ACUS broadband strategy he's squarely focused on the technology and the mass market. "I don't think broadband will change the core of the internet," he sign. Repoll will do what they're doing now, they'll just do it finater." And until someone proves otherwise, while faster may be better, it? utilizately not very different. — Tom Chick:

When not attempting to decode the riddle-laden doublespeak of tech executives, Tom Chick is a Los Angeles-based writer who frequently contributes to www.DailyRadar.com



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→ Profile

THE XBOSS: AN INTERVIEW WITH ROBBIE BACH

Microsoft's top Xbox exec tells us how a company with no console experience plans not only to break into the market, but to win

Next to the pay making the Dotto's Pobooxs, Robbie Bach is me business main the videogarte industry A longitude for the control execution whose campaign insteads with the control execution of the control works during the control of the control works day to the control of the control works day to the control of the control of the Sove Ballmer and Bill Cales. You might this a vestion Microsoft execution in charge of a global product baunch would be a stone-faced, and opported talanch to the bits in the interest, and the control of the control of the control pool on talance as they came.

revealed how several key Microsoft employees conceived the Xbox project. How did Microsoft's executive staff come to realize the importance of the console videogame market? le Bach: I think the first time where Bill (Gates) and myself really got serious was at the executive staff retreat last year, which was a year ago February, Usually there is a designated set of topics. At this retreat we got a chance to ase our own topics, so we prop talk about the console market and what Microsoft's role should be in light of the change in the mission to focus on any time, any place, any device. Bill actually proposed his own topic and then decided not to go to it. When it changed to our topic, he joined up for about an hour and a half on that initial discussion. He'd obviously thought about the topic in the past, but I think that was the first time he had people in the room who had spent some time in the gaming market — who had some expertise and some insight - and that got him really engaged. From that time forward he was very interested in driving the process for understanding how we could be more successful in that marketplace and how we could tap into the strength of that marketplace as a whole. That's where things really got started. I was in that working session and then I got heavily engaged in the June-July time frame when it became clear, from a technical perspective, that we had more of a plan. I got involved in figuring out how we would work with third parties, how we would

this into a great business for Microsoft and for the games industry. NG: Taking on the other big console manufac-

turers is no small feat. So where does Xbox fall in the hierarchy of Microsoft's priorities? RB: Xbox is in the top two or three major investment projects. In fact I'll be giving a briefing to financial analysts that will be very focused on the Xbox and the investment Microsoft's making - why it's strategic, why it's important, and why we're so committed to this. There will only be two or three of those kinds of investments that are being highlig during that day Most of the day obviously will be spent on our .Net initiative, Office, and Windows, but there's two or three major investments the company's making in new areas, and Xbox is clearly an important one in that context. Another way to measure its importance: Bill doesn't stand up on the stage and make the kind of announcement we made at GDC (NG 05/00) without the company being very firmly and dramatically committed to being successful. That was a very high-profile event. We are entering a new category and, as you say, you compete with some established and well known competitors. That's not something we take lightly

NG: Sega's Dreamcast network goes live on Sept. 9. How do you think it will be received: You know we have a lot of experience with online gaming. To be honest I think they're going to have a hard road to hoe. Online is incredibly important and will be a key part of what we do with Xbox, but it's our belief that it's in the broadband marketplace, not a narrowband marketplace. The content you can ovide in the narrowband world isn't the kind of content that's going to generate broad appeal. People don't want their gaming devices to be an online browsing device, they want their online gaming device to be an online gaming device. I'm convinced that's going to be the right perspective, and the Xbox online gaming experience will be second to none.

Sega is in a tough position. They've launched their product. Their platform is toown, it's fixed, and now, in the next year to 18 months they have Sony launching in the United States and Europe, Hierorish Haunching, and Nintendo launching, There's going to be a lot of money in development dollars spent to make those platforms successful.

NG: Can you estimate how much mon launching Xbox is going to cost Microsoft? RB: Well it's hard to do that, in part because some of it depends on how you want to categorize certain sets of cost. Take for example DirectX. How do I factor that into what we're doing? The marketing alone for this if you look, will be the single largest marketing launch Microsoft's ever done - bigger than Windows 95, bigger than Windows 2000. I worked on Office for five and a half years. I launched three versions of products there, We'll spend more in one year on Xbox than we've spent in five years of building the Office business. It's a consumer market. It's a big investment. The marketing alone is hundreds of millions of dollars. I Ed. note: Following this interview. Bach revealed his \$500-million marketing budget to analysts.)

NG: Considering the similarities between Xbox and PlayStation 2 (target audience, DVD format, price point, a planned PS2 hard drive), what really separates the two machines RB: I actually think there are very few things the two machines have in common. There is a lot of overlap in the audiences. Once you get past that, the products are fundamentally different. Whether it's memory architecture quantity of memory, the way we thought about online. Our focus is on a garning console, Sony's focusing on some home consumer ronics device rather than a gaming device. They have a boited-on hard drive that wasn't really there by design. Our graphics technology and audio technology are fundamentally different and better. There's little or nothing Sony can do about that. People are going to be able to produce better games on our platform.





That's what's going to make Xbox stand out, and it is the thing that matters.

NG: force the top man on Xbox. Here you actually played an Xbox game, yet? Bit! don't think anybody has really played an Xbox game, yet. We have code naming, Ibudi saying you played a game at this stage. I think that would be a list bet our falls on the haven't. Have I sport a lot of time with the software, and working with the first party gays, and looking at third-party ideas in conference! Yeah,

NG: Given that it's about a year from launch, are you at a point now where you've pretty much secured your launch lineup or at least titles that you'd like to see at launch? RB: We're right at that point. We're very close. What ends up happening right now is that there are a lot of people working on titles, so there's plenty of work going on, but that doesn't mean that we've made final selections for the launch itself. There's a lot of factors that so into deciding which titles are soing to be in the launch because we're going to have a different set of titles we're going to want to launch in Japan versus the United States and Europe - some of which we're still working out with the third parties themselves. At some point you end up making a call about which titles are going to be completed for the initial launch. So that topic is going to be a hot topic over time. In regards to our public announcements over the coming months, I think you see us focus more on the developers and the general projects they're working on.

NG: Such as the Bungle acquisition, which analysts have estimated to cost Microsoft somewhere in the \$20 to \$40 million range Was it closer to 20 or 40?

RB. That is just not something we talk about. There's a lot of confidentially reasons why we don't. But were obviously super excited about the acquisition and those guys are moving up here shortly. Flalo obviously is going to be a great, great product.

NG: Since your announcement, there has been a lot of speculation about Holo. Is it going to be an Minesecularize product! I think you've made a lot of the PC owners nervous.

RB: We haven't announced any specific plans, but it's definitely a title you'll see on multiple platforms.

NG: Excelent. Going ferward, Xhox first party gunz ld fries bitce president of Games Publishingh has talked about Pherosoft making very focused, strategic acquisitions. Bearing in mind that this interview went'reach readers until early September, can you talk about any more in the pipeline new? BE: There-jort anything in the pipeline I can

talk about because of the fact that there isn't anything in the pipeline. But I will say that it's always hard, particularly if you're looking at a September, October, or a November date, these things are always hard to project. Even before we acquired Bunger, would I have been able to say, "tey this is something that's probably in the pipelinien" The answer is no. Opportunities come up, and we'll continue to be both strategic and opportunistic at how we look at the markeuboke.

NGI ha recent interview with Gamera.com, Sony Vice Prosedor of Reparach and Development Phi Farthon suggested that the Healy that Microsoft will announce faith the sharply that Microsoft will announce faith changes in the Xibon hardware before we see the fail industrial design Considering that you've already upped the CPU speed, is breat you've already upped the CPU speed, is breat you've already upped the CPU speed, is breat you've already upped the CPU speed, is the amount of Bill will will be the speed of Bill while will be you be the world "sign changes" there has been you as the completion could be appeared to the committee of the proper has comercibing could be appeared to the committee could be appeared to committee could be speed to the country of the countr

NG: Everything available on PS2 nght now someone or less something that was already done more or less something that was already done have admitted to seeing concepts for Xbox games, have you seen any radical changes in gamesplay or design?

RI: Uthink Whate yor'll find it a misc. Frankly, that's what it's going to take to be successful. I

any plans to change anything else at this time.

that's what it's going to take to be successful. I think you are going to have to have a set of what fill call "tried-and-true" concepts and genres and franchises that people are going to look for as an indicator of success. NG, Right, people are going to want titles like

Resident for and festors. But A word is open titles. There will be similar francises and dimitar geners that you've soon before. If we have too much of the indicators are distributed and not enough of cutting edge, people will think the people if the first in community. But if were purely innovation, we word get the critical mass of people at the ritidal ragues who want to play the things they know and love and who will spread the word shoot how great. XDox is an apartform. So mally what the game is all about right now it figuring out the mid.

NG: There has been a lot of speculation about Japan-based players like Namco and Capcom. What's the status of the relationships with developers in Japan at this point? RB: I think that the relationship with the developers has been going quite well. It's certainly an area where the company has to build relationships. We know those companies somewhat well from our existing evolvement in the Japanese marketplace, but certainly building relationships with the Namcos, Squares, and the Capcoms takes a little bit more time, and that's something that we're doing right now I'm very confident we'll have some exciting things to talk to people about over the coming two months. There is an obvious event where you

can expect that we'll have some things to say

NG: In two months — you're talking about Tokyo Game Show (Sept. 22 –24)? RB: Same

NG: So is Xbox still on schedule for a worldwide launch? Is that going to happen? RB: We're still on schedule for that.

NG: So there's a specific date?

RB. It's in the files. It's not anything we are talking with anybody about, and we are not spending much then on the specific date ounsilves. We know we want to be there for the fall and for the holiday. Those are the key parameters we have.

NG: The Department of Justice is talking about spitting up Microsoft right now. While the appeal in ongoing, how do you think this will this affect Xbox?

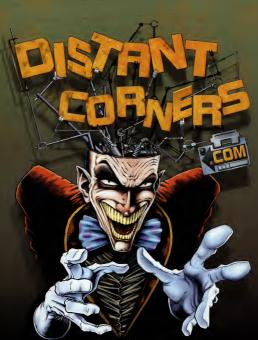
RB: It doesn't. We don't think about it. We will the will the spit think the transfer the spit think about it.

RBI. It doesn't. We don't think about it. We don't think there's any particular issues that apply to us. So we're just staying focused on the II to IB months from now I think there is a general assumption outside of Microsoft that spenjar are spranding a tot of time thinking about It. Certainly there is a collection of people in the legisle department who spend all day thinking about that – but we know what our job is.

NG. That's bard to believe. Few if it just come of whom to physically patient facilities. Yes carriport the fired Sea without billing a few fish. Bl. Bagily if it were to over come to that stage—and obviously people here don't think it will—certainly blove are some practicalities that everyone his to think about I don't suggest that of the company spit up people woods? I have to think about I don't suggest that of the company spit up people woods? I have to think about I begin. All find woods in the company spit up to be the come battle graying Will are moving in a couple of mortal to our own whose.

NG. You mention the PS2 as a substouch forms electronics device. We neither you now Sony have really made any concrete statements regarding your broadband returneds. RB. By point was purely about contine. If you like to No. If Marchardy, deligner of PS2 and president of Sony Computer Internalmental and look at the last 60 pers references Sony's seased, check to see how many of them have been about Packston as a word comine.

periodical of few year operation in contraction and a mount direct to the how many of them have been about Hydrication as great garriag many periodical or the second periodical or periodical periodical or a second-time, that years to replace year PC, and Hydrication as some other high Hydrication as much more general many. Hydrication as much more general large Hydrication as a much more general to be relief for Xhoo to a very powerful too, but or the first them to the second periodical many and the second periodical many and the second periodical completeled for them, and a my opinion, makes the loss a little more compensation of many periodical many periodical



illustrating by ELI S STONE (C) DISTANT CORNERS 2K



6:57 pm - GEAR BEG PROFESSA DEOP TO 22nd PASSIVE

11:40 pm - WHEELS CHANGED. 17th Position.

2:18 am - Spun Into Guard Rail. 15th Position

9:00 am - Toyelve Hours Down
And Twelve to Go.
200 Miles Per Hour
7:80 Margin For Error.

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shanged music over the years, the graphics have certainly taken amazing travels for its Ground till and N or reportaging of a pair of 16-bit, spriteassed games), Konami commissioned some knockout intro movies and commissions are the highly demandate coumple at loft certainly captures the remained pair or the highly demandate comple at loft certainly captures the remained pair or the highly demandate comple at loft certainly captures the remained pairs.

KGradus stavok by Ataxohi Tagnoto using Solamago from Alas/Woveford and Photoshop and Alastifects from Adobe



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Some months are all contrast: from brutish brawlers and deadly ninjas to nature-loving dolphins, it's here



Dreamcast

ship





Tangs are randy more acciting that when the heavyweight three leather around. When the heavyweight three leather around. When 1225 personal of the Lagle are coming your property of the lagle are coming your property of the lagle around the property of the lagle around the lagle

ill You can play as one of 24 real-life fighters i Training, Exhibition, UFC, Yournament, and Career modes, or you can creats your own Sighter from one of 30 different martial arts

■ DREAMCAS

Ultimate Fighting Championship

There are no holds barred in Crave's fantastic ultimate fighting game The Ultimate fighting game graphing, striking, and submissions really looks. There are no spin block, and there're all accessible with simple

the Utimate Fighting
Championship began as a way
to settle the oldest question in martial arts who could kick whose as it
an or-tiels fight An underground payper-view phenomenon since 1993,
the UFC has been a laboratory for
scientific unarmed mayhem, evolving
from a nearly rule-less series of barelouckde tournaments into a showcas
for Ormoric-caliber athletes who mix.

into a precise and exciting contest. Crave Internalment has done a splendid job bringing the UFC to Dreameast with a game whose true boatly is that it's so unities any fighting game that's ever come before. Completely lifelike and based scrupulously on the real cage-fighting of the UFC, this may be the first ever fighting same to present finitions as it. cartwheels, or forward filps. Most fights actually end up on the ground, where a grappling match develops. Matches end quickly and suddenly, with lightning-quick K.O. strikes or brutal submission holds.

The gameplay is surprisingly deep and intricate; UFC boasts a library of ground positions, reversal techniques submission attempts, and counters. and they're an accessible with simple button combinations. To win at UFC is to learn the subtlettes of positional advantage and recognizing opportunities to finish your opponent — as well as creating opportunities to reverse a bad situation.

There's a lot to learn, but it's never overwhelming. You just have to adapt to a more meticulous, thoughtful style of fighting game; people who



Street Fighter III: Double Impact WWF Royal Rumble Omlkron: The Nomad Soul Wait Disney's Magical Racing Tour



Tenchu 2 Parasite Eve 2 NFL GameDay 2001 Mortal Kombat: Special Forces

Valkyrie Profile



116

Icewind Dale KISS Psycho Circus

PC Warlords Battlecry Bangl Gunship Eite

games are pretty good, we at Next Generation will continue to demand even better. Note that a three-star rating is a typical "good" game, so expect to see a lot of them.

***** REVOLUTIONARY

**** EXCELLENT **** GOOD +++++ FAIR

*☆☆☆☆ BAD Denotes a review of a Japanese product



This was the question the first UFC set out to answer Experts from the disciplines of kung fu, numo, tae kwon do, and other martial arts assembled in Oenver to sort things out. Amazings, it was a 175-pound Brazillan named Royce Grade, the lightest man in the tournament, who came out on top and retired undefeated after three tournament championships. The UFC has since evolved significantly; no one style, even Gracia's jujibu, is enough to win now. In LPC, as in the real sport, you'll have to learn how to punch, kick, wrestle, and submit. A safe bet for your character; a mix of jujitsu for groundfighting and Thai kickbooing for when you're on your feet.

go in swinging wildly will end up unconscious or tapped out in no time. The game includes 30 different real-world martial arts, including such major styles as Brazilian jujitsu, wrestling, and Thai kickboxing. Each style offers different approaches to finishing a fight: boxers look to K.O. you on your feet, while a jujitsu man wants to take you to the ground and finish you with a choke or joint lock. The mix and balance of these styles

makes for endless replayability Adding to the joy of the gameplay is the lavish detail paid to accurately rendering the world of the UFC Twenty-four real competitors appear, each modeled with his own tinctive style. Every tattoo and scowl is perfectly in place, with 3D

models that set new standards for realistic human characters in a fighting game. Every muscle movement is accurate for technique after technique, from a Thai boxer's standing clinch to a julitsu fighter's devastating triangle choke

All the little flourishes are right on, as well. Big John McCarthy, the event's gigantic referee since 1994, occasionally intercedes to stop the fights when one fighter is getting mauled. The ring introductions by Bruce Buffer are spot-on, as is the entire broadcast-style presentation (complete with the UFC's signature

music and telecast font) Capping off the goodness is the best Create Fighter/Career mode ever seen in a fighting game. You



120

125

125

shape a fighter using combinations of martial arts styles, and as you win in UFC competition, you can spend skill points on improving your game. It's a long, hard road to the championship belt, but an incredibly fun one.

If UFC has any flaws, they're just minor omissions due to the intricacy of the sport itself. You won't see a lot of the exotic groundfighting submissions that can make watching the UFC so surprising; UFC renders the basics very well but couldn't possibly have been expected to let you perform a sacrifice throw into an elevator sweep into a leg scissors mission. Hardcore fans of the sport will notice where some corners were cut but will also be the first to



erwise avallable here. UFC is one of the best fighting games of all time, and by far the most true to life. It will thoroughly satisfy anyone interested in mono o mono - Don Morris combat games.



Bottom Line: No-holds-barred fighting gets a world-class Dreamcast translation, with gameplay that's both lifelike and exciting.











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Ecco is cute and fairly easy to control, but what you do with him is usually pretty up in the air

- DREAMGAS

Ecco the Dolphin:Defender of the Future

Gorgeous and impossible to understand — just like, um, well...

if there's one thing you can say with confidence about Sega's Ecco series, it's that the games have certainly been consistent. The plucky aquatic mammal's previous outlines; were marked by amazing graphics, some placid soundtracts, a vaguely when (pardon the pun), and, unfortunately, incredibly obscure and hard to follow gameplus.

Defender of the future has moved the series into full 3D, and you can't help noticing that it easily bests all earlier Ecco titlies in every single one of the above categories. The graphics are about the best we've ever seen; if you squint a little, you could almost swear you're watching a rerun of Flipper (or maybe Discovery Channel's "Shark Wesk" – take your pick). It's a fully realized underwater world, breathtaking in detail, in which

every tiny fish, every frond of seaweed, and every barnacleencrusted rock stands out as a model of near-unparalleled realism.

The control is fairly responsive as well. Ecco has a number of dolphin tricks, from flips and spirs out of the water, to a tallwalk, to a forward dash good for pounding the gills of pesky sharks and other critters. The speed

FUN ECCO FACTS

Plact. Ecco. a Sward on the sottle-need displats which – contrary to the garn's tropical setting e-tudals perfer high pic older where abough they do permed solds to contrar regions. Fact: The bottle-need displant is second only to humans in the ratio of train must to body man part to be only depict of orall file are excit pile. They are a distinctive as face or dispurption on people, though them are no known reports of statud displant with surrelayed beforeards. Platform In San Holland Conference. of the dash makes aiming a trifle difficult, but you can eventually master it with practice.

On the other hand, the one thing that never really happens is your being given a clear indication of where to go or what to do when you

Barks on below Gristens Viscori

get there. Each new level is larger and more confusingly laid out than the last, and most of the time you're reduced to simply swimming around, hoping against hope you'll stumble over whatever it is you were

supposed to find.

The massive, open-ended environments and gongoous scenery do fend themselves well to simple exploration for its own sales. If you wanted, you could spend literally hours swimming around, doing tricks, talking in the sints, without really accomplishing

anyoning.

Trouble Is, you wind up doing that even when you genuinely want to accomplish something.

— jeff Lundrigon

E NextGen★★☆☆☆

Bottom Line: It certainly shows off the graphic splendor Dreamcast is capable of, but if you're actually going to try playing the game to completion, forget it.

THE DARK KNIGHTS TOYED WITH THEIR BLOODY TROPHIES BEFORE DISGARDING THEM LIKE THE REST anquish your enemies wit seven powerful Heroes. secome immersed in your kingdom n over 120,000 frames of animation. Battle in a Special RPG DeathMatch mode.



→ Finals @



want to swing, and once you do. World Series Baseball 2KI you're committed, which means no check-swings and few, if any atrocious camera angles you're given don't offer any help either.

Strike one!

The best way to describe World Series Baseball 2KI is to say it's the Phantom Menace of the baseball gaming world. Much like the latest entry in the Star Wars series of films, we were forced to endure years of excruciating anticipation, only to be given a final product that shone in the special effects department but as a major letdown overall.

It's obvious that most of the int ensuring the preview wies would look good — at the ense of gameplay. Major sir ber one: You can't control turn on auto fielding anyway, but to offer absolutely no choice in the matter is pretty inexcusable. egredous when you consider that the fielders react to the ball as if

The pitcher-batter match-up contains a couple of new w but like most arcade-style baseball nes of the past, it's virtually possible to tell a ball from a strike unless the pitch biatantly misses the strike zone. When batting, you need to hold down the right trisper button until you



neolay and feature list

t moved much beyond

the 8-bit console stage. As a matter of fact, we seem to

ficiders as far back as the Azari

recall being able to co

ENextGen ★☆☆☆☆

Bottom Line: If lifelike graphics are what you want. save yourself \$60 and turn on ESPN; the gameplay

Aerowings 2: Air Strike

The onoral Aerownes was a demanding, relatively realistic fight sim with only one real fault - that it featured start flyor but no combat. Acrowings 2 on the other hand, is second amound nothing but combut though it does use roughly the same fight engine. This means it's not notice test of skill to fiv well, but now enemies are shooting at you too which at least sounds intresting There's a training mode to help

get you into the swine of thines, and if the missions are pretty frustrating at times, they do a decreet job of tracking you how the different aircraft behave Then, as you complete each training session, you qualify to paint that craft in the free first and tactical challenge modes

This is where the real problem. creeps in The game just doesn't offer a whole lot of vanety in the twood challenge, the basic idea is to shoot a certain number of targets in the





king for fun, try something else dorfelds, then try your best to wo

There's no story or career mode, and while the game is portly challenging it. just gets old fast. There's also a twoplayer splitsomen mode, which can be fun, but given the relative realism of the simulation It's not exactly a party

If you're the sort of enthusiast who lives for the challenge of true modern flight combat, this is about as close as you can get on a console. If you've just looking for a good time and easy kilk, look elsewhere - leff Lundrigen

NextGen ★★★☆☆

Bottom Line: Aerowings 2 succeeds on its own terms, It's just a matter of whether those terms appeal to you or not.

Street Fighter III: Double Impact

We really can't blame Capcom for miking the Street Fighter franchise for all it's worth. We just wish they'd do it with a little more pizzazz. Street Fighter N. Double Impact is a single disc that contains two games: the original Street Fighter IV from the arcades and its follow-up. Street Fighter N Second Impact Ken and familiar fighters among the cast of

This game is most notable for its back-to-basics fighting engine that strips away all the X-, V-, and A-isms that have come to dutter the Street Fighter stage Gone are the vanous power bars and alpha-counters, instead, Street Fighter N features a much smoother parrying system, durcker recovery times, and simple "super arts" that are easy to chain into devastating combos. The result is fast, smooth, and fun fighting that is much closer to the gameplay found in Street Fighter A



obligatory Capcom light show

nothing more than port the game over from the arcade. There are no hidden characters or new costumes, and none of the secret bonuses we've come to expect from home conversions of fighting games. Nor is there much reason to try the singleplayer mode, as the endine moves for each character are, in standard Capcom tradition, just awful But these games have always been designed for playing against thends, and in that regard. Street Fiatour N is fairly satisfying

Unfortunately Capcom has done NextGen★★★☆☆

Bottom Line: It's a no-frills port of the arcade game that is great at a party but pointiess for single players.

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and executarly take home 47 galf media. Or you can buy fore-fix. Performance and Semi-Sivet bred accessories. Whatever-works for you, we're easy, But you should know the more points you have, the greater your chance of wireing strays, pour and visioganes suff. You're not again so you'd better play like the obsessed or die file they are also produced to the spinish or you'd better play like the obsessed or die file the next.

PLAY WITH US











diance del



ost immediately gratifying mode

Less traditional but more

Interesting is the exhibition mode

instead of the usual one-on-one

range all over the arena. You even

get to choose from different sets

of dastardly double team moves to cheat with. - Doniel Erickson

or tag team match ups, one to

Sega and Yuke's of Japan have noticeably absent teamed up to bring a wrestling same to Dreamcast that's actually answer to WrestleMania 2000 orth playing. But Royal Rumble that Dreamcast fans were hoping nal, addictive arcade action. The wrestling fans. First of all, there's no career mode, nor anything that even is the Royal Rumble itself, a freefor-all battle royal with nine men on screen at once and thirty who create-a-character mode, despite featuring the smallest lineup of playable superstars anywhere.

appear is a strange mix of the latest stars, older has beens, and never will-bes. Stone Cold Steve Austin who's been on the injured list for ore than a year — makes an appearance, as do forgettable midcarders D'Lo Brown and Al Snow, Tag team mavericks like the Dudley Boyz and Too Cool, meanwhile, are

ENextGen★★★☆☆

Bottom Line: It's neither deep nor revolutionary, but it's a whole lot of fun.

Omikron: The Nomad Soul

An ambitious if badly flawed artion ladventure some for PC becomes an ambitious if badly flawed and pretty dam usly action/adventure game for Dreamcast. The basic gist here is that you've been recruited to ferret out demons in a parallel world, Omistron, which is one of those stant. comed cities (that somehow still contains for - so fears). Mostly this is a typical adventure

wime. You essimine everything pick up obscure objects, then figure out how to use them. There are a handful of puzzles that are "what were they thinking" stumpers, but it's mostly pretty straightforward. There are also some first-person shooter and feliting game sections as well, but the less

said about them, the better The fetting engine cloesn't even include a block button, while the FPS hits use the D-oad to move and the analog

stick to arm - not smart or good. The story line and characters are fairly interesting, and the approach is refreshingly adult, but the game is sheer torture on the eyes. We're guessing many of the graphic assets were lifted from an aborted PlayStation version - blocks low polygon characters covered with big



DREAMCAST FINALS

rate is still slow and clurky A cool idea, backy done - leff Lundrigon

smeary textures - and yet the forme NextGen★★☆☆☆

Bottom Line: The worst thing about Omikron is that with more thought and polish, it might have been a winner.

Walt Disney World Quest **Magical Racing Tour**

by every fan under the sun who's suffored through any generic (but ever so 'wady') driving game like this one Mancal Racing Tour takes the popular Disney license, claregards its best characters, and shoehoms bit players and all-new polypoiles into a Ifeless, weapons-laden racer

Sans the name recognition of Mickey Donald, or Goofy - none of them show up here - Tour must travel long and hard on the tank of watery gas that is its gameplax Tracks are based on Disney World attractions like Space Mountain, and you can the most cliché-noiden courses while

structureously being aurally assaulted by the looping serenades of "Buffsio. Gat," "Zip-A-Dee-Doo-Dah," and "It's a

Pretty graphics and a decent sense of speed redeem the title somewhat. as does a solid multiplayer mode, but there's not even a token nod toward creativity or originality and it follows the kart racing game blote to the letter: Tour proves it's a soulless world. after all. - Greg Orlando



NextGen ★★☆☆☆

Bottom Line: Video game behemoth Eidos has fallen prey to the notion that wacky characters plus karts plus odd nower-ups automatically equals good racing fun. It doesn't

Silver

■ Platform: Oreemcast ■ Publisher: Infogremes ■ Developer: Spiral House

Grand in scale but mundare in delivery. Silver shines like bronze. The PC RPG-rone-console rame provides. a fine fusion of strict sword andsomery questing with Final Fixin-style. weapons-based brawling, but ultimateby the same trips over stell some-

trmes with gusto A hacknessed plot establishes young David as the plucky can-do warmor who must collect elebt mancal orbs, smite an evil wizard gather heroes for three-man adventuring parties, restore true love, yadda yedda yedda. Silver opts for a topdown third-person perspective back so destically that the characters. appear about half an inch tall This affords some stunning views of the

enymoments but hombly man sameplay The parioramic view often gives lette indication of where an exit is, and you'll repeatedly have to employ the left treeer button to hishlight doors, in combat, swarming enemies and even the smolest of everyday objects desks, chairs, tables, etc. — serve to obscure the on-screen action

On the up side, Silver eschews turn-based combat and does quite well with an arcade-style fluft system Swines and strokes of the applica stick enable different attacks and blocks. and a snappy Al enables Dand's

various affecto for in the struggle

against evil it ain't perfect, but there's a good trne to be had - Greg Orlando

NextGen ★★★☆☆

Bottom Line: Value the precious metal. Use reading glasses to savor the game.

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Tenchu 2: Birth of the Stealth Assassins

A classic PlayStation game gets an almost worthy sequel

The original Tenchu was samply a great PlayStation name. Its atmosphere. design, and gristy stealth kills worked together to make an absorbing experience that emphasized patience and observation



respectable second effort that falls just short of being a classic in its own right The same is actually a proquel that fea-

tures the familiar Rikimaru and Ayame while Introducing fellow Azuma Ninja Tatsumaru. acters - though Ayame's subplot, unfortu-nately, is filled with broad physical comody

over button mashine. Tenchy 2 is a

The controls have been improved, with he welcome addition of analog support.

There are several interesting new Ninja items to use, but the best additions are the new stealth kills, especially Tatsumaru's.

TOO MUCH TRUTH SPOILS THE FUN

as cool as the Ninja in Tendhu 2 are, history reveals a more doclin reality. While it is true that is were occasionally used for explorage and assassination, Ninjitsu was actually loped over many years by rural families. The philosophy of Ninjitsu includes not only a

since the collision detection is a bit spotts The biggest problem is that the developers decided to set most of the levels in the great outdoors. Trouble is, Psystintion simply t have the power to render a real

Lincoln Logs, bushes like they're made out of construction paper, and (to keep polygon counts low) there's a very short range of , which causes the whole world to in and out as you move. Considering that the original Tenchu excelled at creating an intricate world of villages, palaces and reofters, the predominance of outdoor environments here is a disappointment.

One cool addition is a mission editor that comes with ten pre-made missions and allows you to design your own from scratch it isn't terribly powerful, and you can't create enormous palaces or exotic environments. but siven that a user-created level takes only a single memory card block, there's plenty of



ENextGen ★★★★☆

Bottom Line: Tenchu 2 doesn't surpass the original but does succeed in capturing its atmosphere and smooth gameplay. And despite some minor weaknesses, the game is without a doubt exceedingly cool.







■ PLAYSTATION

Parasite Eve II

Parasite Eve II. Brea, who battled

has been softened in the sequel with

humor. Don't be fooled though: she's

still hard-edged enough to snap a Buick.

Brea's return, at once creepy and triumphant, heralds great things for the

waning days of PlayStation. Eve II picks

gameplay has been tightened with a slick realtime battle system that

enables you to switch weapons on the

fly, bust off mad caps at will, and scroll

button. Square delightfully excised the original's lame "attack bar" feature

between targets with the press of a

And Square brings forth a delightful new genesis for Eve mitochondria gone mad in the original

*I don't suppose I'll be fighting any giant cactus creatures," muses FBI agent Aya Brea in Square's unnerving 3D horror adventure/RPG



WHAT? IS THAT A BOOK YOU'RE READING, BOOKIE?

It's interesting to note the Parasite Eve game series was birthed from the mind of Japanese science Riction writer Holded Sens. Sens's novel Parasite Eve sold a robust Li million copies in Japan and gasened as the action more in 1972 Square tools Sens's work and monetieped with the mill (perhap) plut enough to said salos supriseasentries as royally checks or licensing felio) to create the game. Though the basic jets of inflocthoralist sparring a cellular revelation remains create the game. Though the basic jets of inflocthoralist sparring a cellular revelation remains and the sparring of the sparring of inflocthoralist sparring a cellular revelation remains and the sparring of the sparring of inflocthoralist sparring a cellular revelation remains the sparring of the sparring sparring sparring sparring sparring and sparring and sparring and sparring sparrin act, Square created an all-new story and setting for the game

which, oddly, required Brea to power up before she could use a weapon. However, it kept the ability to fight younger-looking features and a sense of strategically by shifting position during : shootout. Battles against the game's freakish malcontents are brutally scamless, and even tapping into Brea's "parasite energy" powers can be done with only the briefest of interruptions.

A sweeping plot brings the notion of "Whom do you trust?" to the forefront and Square packs a lot of paranola into two CDs. Music has been trimmed to emphasize every sort of ambient sound - footsteps, the delicate play of water from a fountain, the rustling of evil underneath the ground — to create an

eerie world that's best savored when the sun has dipped. Though this new

ENextGen ★★★★☆

Bottom Line: Square seems to have taken to heart most of the criticism from the original. Eve II is scary good fun.



Eve suffers a bit from too dense puzzles

and a lackluster Resident Evil-style

movement system, its twisted take on the hellish double helix tastes as sweet as the forbidden fruit from the tree of knowledge. - Greg Orlando This RPG seems intent on offering a tribute to every old-school garning genre simultaneously. The graphics are classically beautiful, hand-drawn 2D. The dungeon crawling is handled platform-style, with jumping climbing, pushing, and initiating combat with everything in sight, while the combat resembles a four-man-per-party arcade brawl, using combo attacks, want crushes, special attack meters, and other Street Fighter stacks.

Refreshingly based upon Norse mythology an incredibly long opening cut some introduces Vallorie, a warrior endriess who remain the souls of newly dead soldiers to aid the gods in a coming spocalyptic war Both time and expenence points become precious commodities, as you must condevelop them, and choose when to send each fighter off to the greater war. While this creates an incredibly cus-



sion is comowhensive but needlessiv complex, and though new recruits often have polenent, mature background stones, little development takes. place after they igin. There's also an odd lack of purpose to most of the dunwon crawls, which seem to exist. only to offer arcade-style diversions and colleged for the main thrust of the game - stat and resource management, which just port as involving as a tomizable, replayable expenence, there really good story. - Fric Bestcher

■NextGen★★★☆☆

Bottom Line: This is an ambitious, noble game with a pelling combat system, great open-ended character customization, and a unique setting. However, it's more artistic than modern and will have trouble competing with flashier, less management-oriented titles.

Mortal Kombat: Special Forces

The premise is sound take the Mortal Kombat characters and flesh them out by putting them in their own action/adventure comes. Unfortunately. much like the awful Michologres Sub-Zero, MK. Special Forces takes a promising concept and drops it, stomos it into the ground, and leaves it to rot under the sweltening sun. You play as lox, a metal-armed

men who can punch the ground hard enough to insure bystanders with the shock wave. So what do you do besides fight people? You wander around levels looking for keys to doors that, in all honesty you should be able to break through with your cybernetic bare hands. At one point you're even stopped by a filmsy door leading to a fire escape. Then there's the the obligatory sewer level that not hack but also has keycards just lying about - in a sewer Didn't we get past this in the 8-bit age?



list: The homble, too-close, carriers; the lack of any stone the repetitive gameplay (punch, punch, KOMBOS),

the fog (meaning you actually have to set dose to enemies to short them): the badly designed levels; and the enemies who, believe it or not, never mes with their automatic weapons And so one of the hottest licenses In videogames gives another hideous

- Rose Righer

NextGen ★☆☆☆☆

Bottom Line: Don't let the cheap price fool you. This isn't even worth the trip to the store.

death rattle.

Is this GameDay's last season?

NFL GameDay 2001

it was the first football game to grace the PlayStation, and de us provid. NFL GameDay was a simple game that was tined to evolve into the lean, on football machine that is NFI. eDay 2001. At this point, the ID players are even scaled to their on-captured tackies of all cties have replaced those early. evolved with time, executing we plays and players to guarantee authenticity fighting back on defense with the w play as any receiver or run ning back, calling for the pass after you lake. Yes, it's all good, but. Nothing that evolves does so reedly, and GameDay 2001 is no exception. There's a noticeable ount of stuttering and popping in the graphics, especially in the stadiums. The play selection eens are a bit vague when it comes to establishing which

In fact, this is the first time in

been the absolute outting edge of NFL veterans like Jerome Bettis nsole football. It's not really 989's Terrell Davis and Mike Alstott, while fault - this is probably as good a all title as you're likely to find on the system. However, it's hard not to notice that there are other nes out there and arguably GameDay 2001 is still one hell of a

the motion capture was performed Is NFL GameDay 2001 worth owning? You bet, is the franchise still that question - when, and it, it ws where this series is headed on no expense bringing in lots of pro

TO HUDDE F





ENextGen ★★★★☆ Bottom Line: This game deserves a spot in your sports line-up, but everyone we know wants the PS2 version. Is this the end of the line for the PlayStation GameDay series?

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Ragnarok, the spocalypse, is approaching, Your ultimate purpose will transcend life itself. From the creators of 'STAR OCEAN. The Second Story' comes Valleyrie Profile", a stunningly beautiful RPG adventure with a story like none before.

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The battle begins when life ends.







Icewind Dale

Less reading, more hacking

Black Isle's third Infinity Engine-based RPG strikes a nice balance between the first two. Where Baldur's Gate was a mix of story, puz ving, and attacking, the second,

Planescape: Torment, placed the emphasis squarely on the story with time is on a dungeon-crawl style of gameplay and tactical, gory fun. The game is enormous, but this

isn't due to multiple paths or hours of reading. While you can wander around, it's quite linear with events occurring in a set order. This works well given the game's scope, and as you travel along the backbone of the world, you have more than enough interesting areas — which are usually

brimming with player-eating monsters Anyone familiar with the first two games will feel instantly at home with lcewind Dale's Isometric view and

point-and-click control. Unfortunately some of the originals' problems still exist. Finding paths is cumbersome, and character alignment seems to affect only what possessions you can carry. Oddly, a ring or an amulet takes as much inventory space as a sword or a helm, and you're forced to drop or sell items more often than should

But battles are interesting and fun, if a little contrived. Like the previous games, Icewind Dale mixes realtime

and turn-based attacking. You can pause the game, move characters change weapons, cast spells, etc., then restart and watch the action take place. Some of the battles do have a

ENextGen ★★★★☆

Bottom Line: A huge, engrossing game with the most action in the Forgotten Realms series, Icewind Dale earns its place on the hard drive of any self-respecting RPG fan.



scripted feel, though. Most monsters have ranged trigger points, enabling you to pick off groups in bite-sized chunks instead of being swarmed It's more than just a game to tide fans over until Baldur's Gate II is released, and Icewind Dale easily

stands tall on its own merits. Through six engrossing chapters, you'll encounter tons of monsters, and the story keeps driving forward. While not exactly original, this is a worthy addition to anyone's collection of well-rounded games. - Kevin Rice

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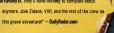


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they're going to try to beat you up . . . severely. It's not going to be a rare thing that you'll have to use your chop-socky training to bash them into disc two." - DailyRadar.com







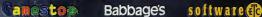
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Bang! Gunship Elite

Take Galana, stretch it out into 3D. put a powerful engine under the hood, cover the whole thing in a beautiful rainbow gloss, and you'll have something like Bengl Gunship Elite — an absolutely gorgeous shooter that doesn't ask much from you except a powerful 3D card and

an string trigger finger

There on't a whole lot to do in Bangf but fly through space and shoot anything that moves, occasonally collecting the odd weapon or power-up along the way. The game only has a rough semblance of a plot, and the 19 different levels all play out the same, although each is

lack of any real need for strategy and fun, and the same has sust shout the best force feedback

You won't have any wingmen or waypoints to worry about, and the may bore tactical samers, but the rine different weapons are colorful



effects we've ever felt. Also, the HUD is necely laid out, and the controls can be easily mapped to any symeoad or joystick.

But the repetitive nature of the combat eventually wears thin in the later levels. The multiplayer is fun for a while, but like the single-player version, it lacks any real innovation. For gamers with a fast ng who just want pretty things to shoot at, Bangi will be an entertaining distraction but only for a while. - Jim Preston

NextGen ★★★☆☆

Bottom Line: A gorgeous but simplistic shooter that will give action fans a short yet fun ride.

KISS Psycho Circus: The Nightmare Child

225 Parks Cours a 4 februaries shooter Period There are no RPG or adventure elements, no complicated control schemes, and the virtue background story really doesn't affect anything at all. In the post-MeE-Cife world. that's either refreshingly unpretentious or mind-numberely smolstic, depending on your point of wew for the

record, we felt a creening numbress. At least the production design is up to snuff though a few too many different energies prove to be just another version of an evil clown. The en/moments if monochrome at times, are for the most part spaceous. with plenty of variety. This was built using the Lithtech 2.0 engine, which means it's pretty stable and fast on a wide range of systems, if not terribly

fashy Technically you can't fault it. The faults come with the overall gameplay design There are four initial "worlds" - one for each member of the bond - but each new character gets esactly two unique weapons: a



to do with creaky FPS game melee weapon and that character's

"attempte" weapon. The rest are always the same, variants of the usual shotour, machine our, erapple, and rocket launcher you can find in a million other sames - not to mention that the machine gun is deliberately wildly recruippe for no apparent reason. Each level is completely linear the puzzles hold no real surprises, and the game's only challenge comes from dispatching hundreds of enemies Very old-school indeed. - Inff Lunchson

NextGen★★☆☆☆

Bottom Line: To be fair, this title accomplishes what it set its sights to do. Trouble is, those sights weren't set very high. This will seem interesting only if the last game you ever played was Doom.

Warlords Battlecry

If The art and music are only mediocre, but there is satisfying depth in the pamental

Role-playing strategy? Realtime heroism? Or both? choose from more than 80 spells.

The Warfords series has always been an admired entry in the turn-based strategy genre. But with Warlords Battlecry; SSG has made an excellent blend of both realtime strategy and hero-

based role playing, In the single-player mode, you start by choosing a single hero and game's 36 different scenarios. ong the way you get to mold him from nine different races, four classes, ten skills, 16 specialties, and





the fighting involves massive assaults with your champion at the center, which can make for some fun battles, but babysitting your hero can be a chore you can choose to play a quick

ENextGen **** Bottom Line: Players who look underneath the ordinary

surface will find a highly entertaining mix of strategy and

skirmish, use the excellent editor

er the Internet, While Battleon

does have an admirable array of options, what it doesn't have is

extra polish. The 2D graphics are

her dated, the cut scenes only

ordinary and the voice acting just

plain bad. Still, what it lacks in style it more than makes up in

substance. — Jim Preston

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Next Generation

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Samer's Guide

Once a month we provide a mind-numbing list of rated games — beware of brain freeze

Welcome to the Gamer's Guide, your insanely popular resource to what's worth buying and what's not even worth a glance. Each month, we update the list with every game we've reviewed since the last time and

cull out older stuff. Which older stuff? Well, mostly old or bad games, especially PC titles, but aging console titles, too. We leave in just about every title that ever got ***** though, since they're almost always a good bet, no matter how old they get. (Although it is worth taking note of which issue it was reviewed in, since time and technology march on, and a game that scored **** a couple of years ago might only score *** today.)

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· Realistic violenc







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Write Our Wrongs

only have one question: Why the new wider format? Personally I hate the new big and bulky size of Next Gen and was perfectly fine with the old size. Plus, the old size was much easier to carry around. Please change it back.

Eric Wong

In a word, no. We fought pretty hard for the wider format — it simply has more presence and makes for a ore authoritative presentation. Most of our readers seem to really like it, and in fact, it's a return to the format we used to have If you're having trouble carrying the new book around, we suggest a few trips to the gym, ya wuss.

I recently read about a new Linux-based game console called Indrema. The Web site (www.indrema.com) says it's "a revolutionary prod-

uct built on a revolutionary operating system, Linux." The only thing I know about it is that it's going to have a 600 MHz processor, and it's going to be able to play MP3s. Do you have any information on this mysterious new console? BlaSt0X@aol.com

Once again, the answer is no. Although we at Next Gen got a few inklings about ema at E3, there doesn't seem to be any info to be had. What little you tion is about all th known, and about the sum total of what you can find out from their Web site which, as of this writing, hasn't had a new annou ment posted in over two

months (and that was about a "collaboration" involving open-source digital video, which isn't exactly gamerelated). The idea of an open-source game platform is vaguely interesting, but

don't hold your breath either. Given the nature of open source, someone would have to manufacture said console without taking loss on hardware sales, sir there would be no way to make that up in licensing (remember the \$700 3DO?) Actually, with its "integrated

Mozilla browser and email,"

it more closely resembles

one of those appliance PCs you can get free for signing with certain ISPs than a game console. Right now, we'd have to place Indrema below even Nuon in terms of poten market impact. And that's

pretty low.

I don't get it, how can article (NG 08 00) that says these 20 new games will save the PC. I know that some of them are great incoming games (specifically Wolfenstein updates), but if

they were soins to save the PC, they'd be PC-exclusive which is not the case. About a quarter of these games are also coming out on consoles which means a less significant impact on the PC market! For example: Halo on Xbox, Black and White on Dreamcast, Max Payre on Dreamcast, Team Fortress 2 announced for a future console, and Sacrifice coming to PS2. Just thought you should have done a little more research before calling them games that will save the

Chris Norton

No, we did our research. The simple fact is that every one of our "Twenty Games That Will Save the PC" were designed from the ground up as PC titles first. There may very well be other versions of some of them: In fact robably all of them will solo off a console version sooner

PC from consoles

or later. We'd say that's practically inevitable, given every single one is an amazing title, and most have a lot of mass-market appeal But you'll see them on PC first, and they'll both look and play better on PC than on any console. Don't agree with us? Try playing

Though finding someone to fill the position has probably been solved when this is printed, I have a suggestion for managing tor — Bill Donohue from PSM. That is, if the editors of PSM don't mind, of course And he should probably be owed to answer letters, like in the old days of Ultra Game

Steven R. Anderson Um, thanks for the suggestion, but we'll pass. Bill is a fun guy at parties, but we're quite happy with the choice of our new Managing Editor, the smart and talen Jennifer Tsao, and we'll take her over a brutish, quite possibly insane, gun-toting

ers. Or not, if you don't

want to. It's just a suggestion

Republican any day. We rattled Bill's cage for a ment though, and he d this to say: "Hey Stevi thy are you writing to Next Gen when I work for PSM? A move like that makes me wonder if you're not a Democrat or something equally weird. Anyway, I will be writing a column in the new, redesigned PSM and probably answering a few letters as well I know you wrote to Next Gen to avoid paying the 'Bill Answered My Letter' fee, but since I have answered it, you owe me

SS00. Cough it up! - Bill I saw a letter, some issues ago, from a reader who was inquiring as

MISSING A OUEST

I have always enjoyed reading your magazine. I am able to go out and rent video games with the confidence that it will not be five dollars wasted on an hour of an unplayable, unattractive, less than exciting game. I have always been an early console adopter and avid video game player.



About a year ago, however, I stopped renting games altogether. Not from something you did, but because I vered Everquest. Eve been playing in their vast online world with few deviations into game rental. I've rarely needed any other games to keep my attention,

I'm curious, Why haven't you reviewed Everquest! I've noticed several mentions by reviewers, comparing and contrasting other games to EQ. Even your definitive review page of all consoles and their scores has a staring omission in the online game section.

I still read your articles to see what gaming has to offer, but it's now more for the enjoyment of reading about a subject that interests me than help in picking out any new games or consoles

Steve Thatcher

Actually, we reviewed Everquest in NG 06/99, it was the opening two-pager, and we gave it five stars. The real "glaring omission" you mention in the Gamer's Guide isn't Everquest though, it's the entire review section from that Issue, which somehow never made it into the Guide. Thanks for pointing this out - linebackers wearing hill glant costumes have pounded the editor responsible into hamburger to teach the value of "fantasy role playing."

to when Next Generation would implement the Hardcore section of the magazine again. I was wondering if any feasible solution had been ascertained.

Marvin Cox Long Beach, CA

Well Marvin, if you mean the "Hardcore" ads we ran over a year ago, which printed So no lit's not true. names from our subscriber The poster in NG 04/00 list in tiny type as a background, that was a marketing promotion that has simply run its course. However, if you mean the true stories we print about "Hardcore" gamers, there's one in the news section this month (page 20). If you have a really good hardcore gaming story, write it, and we'll print It. Tell your friends, and we'll print theirs too.

es that actually sold old I'm a little bit out of the loop as far as E3 goes 2600, \$200, and 7800 When is the next one? Also, will there be one during next Colecovision: etc. I beg you. summer (June-July)? Thanks please let me know. You think for any info. I won't pay \$100 for an Deborah Taylor unopened 2600 Pac-Man. even though I can get it for 50

Like Christmas, Valentine's Day, and your birthday, E3 love games! comes but once a year, and the next one won't come around until May 17-19, 2001. However, the good news is it's still in Los Angeles. If you're looking for something that maybe happens a little sooner - and you can get to Makuhari Messe, Japan there's the Tokyo Game Show, running Sept. 22-24, 2000. Other trade shows are in the works for Hong Kong hough no dates or sites have been set yet.

I heard that Sega is coming out with an additional component for the Dreamcast that will play DVDs. is this true? If so. When would it most likely be out? Ricardo M

A DVD add-on for Dreamcast is an Idea that's been kicking around for a while, and a mock-up was shown at E3, but the idea seemed to be stillborn. For one thing, the unit wasn't a DVD-ROM for Dreamcast: it was just a DVD player. In other words, you could probably pick up a low-end stand-alone DVD player for roughly the same price. It doesn't really fit Into Sega's marketing plan anywhere either (supporting an expensive peripheral that no one buys is a mistake Sega has already made several times, remember).

with all the old systems was incredible. I had never heard of half of the '70s systems, and I'd even forgotten about some '90s systems like Phillips Cd-i and Goldstar 3DO, But what I'm writing about is the article in which you mentioned that an unopened Odyssey can cost \$1000, and I was wondering if you knew any stores or Web systems and their games? I'd love an Odyssey I and 2; Atari

cents? Yes I would, because I

William Moulterie Jamesca, NY

There are a few stores in the U.S. that sell unopened classic game merchandise, as well as opened merchandise that still has its original box. At the Classic Games Expo In fact (see News, page 6), there were plenty of boxed ems for sale, though rtunately, no Odysseys never personally used these sites and stock is always changing, you might try www.atari2600.com, www.unitedgame.com,

www.vglq.com, and www.myatari.com to start off with. You might also try the occasional scan of eBay, but expect to pay a king's ransom for anything that's in demand. However, before you bid, make sure you look up what's rare and what's common, so you don't end up paying big bucks for a game like 2600 Pac-Man that most collectors will give you

for free, Happy Hunting!

n your (ironically) unusually wide NG 09/00 you reviewed the positive and negative points of the GeForce2 GTS and the doo 5 5500. One negative point of the Voodoo S that you left out: This card is huge! We're talking about one cellulite-packed spinster of a

board here. In order to get it into my AGP slot I had to remove the carriage for my hard drive and floppy drive, which are now dangling outside my computer to make room inside for the massive Voodoo card. I bought the Voodoo because I didn't have the 2x AGP slot that the GeForce2 requires, but I didn't know that I wouldn't readily have the space for it in my ATX midtower case! The boys at 3dfx had

better start hiring sweatshop dren with smaller fingers so their next board Isn't as grossly disproportionate to the rest of my computer! Anubis2@aol.com

Actually, the Voodoo S board's unusually large size ought to have been readily apparent from the pictures we ran, but as for why it wasn't mentioned specifically as a negative, it's simply because with the majority of motherboards and cases the size Isn't really an Issue. Sorry to hear about your specific troubles, but you're

running into a problem that most people don't have. And eve it or not, there are ne AGP boards (the antum 3D dual-Voodoo2 SLI comes to mind) that are even bigger. Voodoo boards have traditionally been huge simply because they generate so much heat, and it helps to out the processors as far apart as possible. One could argue this is a design flaw, we ose, but it has little to do with the size of the children anyone's using in their sweatshops.

While reading the latest issue of Next Gen I came across the games in development for Dreamcast, saw the picture of Atari 2600 Basketball you ran for NBA Hoopz, and laughed my fool head off! I thought

WE'VE GOT A BRIDGE IN BROOKLYN WE CAN LET YOU HAVE CHEAP TOO

Hey guys, please settle mething OK? (I've got ten bucks riding on this). The Next Gen covers that are shown in the Retroview section every month are bogus, right? My friend says that they're real. I say there



Oh sure, Next Gen was Reviews Editor, you might recall

the little note saying "Artist's Conception" was a stroke of genius. Just wanted to say thanks for the good laugh! Tom Zjaba

Well, when it was clear that Midway was not going to be able to get us an actual screen shot in time, we had

to either put a big note in its spot or else just provise. Considering we were a little punchy by the end (you have no idea how mind-numbing writing 200+ capsule previews and reviews, followed by laying

the whole thing out at 4 a.m. can really be), we think you can predict the end result We got a good laugh out of it ourselves, so we were pretty sure everyone else would seems we were right. Good to know we were right about something, because...

was no Next Gen mag back in the 80's. Also, hey, great mag. I have to say that you guys are doing a bang up job. Carry on.

Staff Sergeant Browning Ft. Leonard Wood, MO

Collect your \$10 with pride, oh Staff Sergeant ming — the Retroview covers are deed bogus. Next Gen has only been around since January 1995, but we do enjoy poking fun at the industry (and ourselves) by Imagining what our covers might have looked like had we been around since the dawn of videogames

So now you've gotten the answer you wanted -where's our cut?

There was a mistake in NG 9/00 on page 80 with the screen shot that's supposedly of Sega GT: I don't care what it says, but that's a picture of Gran Turismo. This needs to be dealt with,

In NG 09/00 on page 79, you

had Namco as both the publisher and developer of Resident Evil: Code Veronica I believe Capcom was the one that developed and published that game.

Steelerfan24@aol.com We wish we could blame

sunspots, or alien abduction, or wicked gremlins, or anything else for these errors, but the simple fact is, we messed up. We apologize to Capcom, Sega, and every loyal reader. Rest assured we've taken ourselves outside to be shot.



Next Generation Letters 150 North Hill Dr., Brisbane, CA 94005 nail us: ngonline@imaginemedia.com Note: email is vastly, vastly preferred

Retroview

October 1994

America met the ESRB, and the next generation arrived In early 1994, politicians had five possible content-based

declared open season on violent games, demanding that a ratings system be instituted. The eventual solution was the Entertainment Software Ratings Board (ESRB), a panel that labeled every game with one of



ratings: EC (Early Childhood), K-A (Kids to Adults), T (Teenage), M (Mature), and AO (Adults Only). But as far as the game-buying

public was concerned, the ratings might as well have been Larry, Curty, and Moe. In September, Mortal Kombat II would become the most successful home videogame release of its time at least until three months later when it would be usurped by the

SNES-only Denkey Kong Country. The biggest story of the year, however, was the introduction of the next generation of consoles. First came the Atari Jaguar, which sold briskly initially, but was

hampered by slow manufac turing lines, dreadful games and a controller the approx imate size and heft of an

antique typewriter. Segals Saturn debuted in Japan on Nov. 22, followed a mere eight days later by the Sony PlayStation. Nintendo subsequently announced two units for 1995 release: the illfated Virtual Boy and the Ultra 64, eventually rena the Nintendo 64. The result stateside in 1995, prompting the January launch of a cer-



EGA - B ODO ODO - ATAKS - NINTENDO - TURISDOGRAFINIX - TOO - NDO ODO - AFICADE

What we were playing DOOM II

After all, you couldn't watch the O.J. trial all the time





boutique magazine.







Top grossing

movies of 1994
Forest Gump\$329,691,196
The Lion King
True Lies\$146,261,000
The Santa Clause
The Flintstones
Dumb & Dumber
Clear and Present Danger \$121,965,472
Speed\$121,248,145
The Mask\$119,920,129
Pulp Fiction \$107 900 000



...and in the real world Neison Mandela is elected political leader of South

Africa, just four years after his release from 27 years of incarceration as a political prisoner

Goody-two-skates Nancy Kerrigan is bludgeoned in the leg by a pipe-wielding attacker at a practice facility in Detroit. She recovers in time to win a figure skating silver medal at the Winter Olympics in Lillehammer. An Investigation soon incriminates fellow skater Tonya Harding and leads to the greatest crime of all - the release on videotane of Tonya's wedding night consummation activities.

Former U.S. President and self-proclaimed noncrook Richard Nixon dies after a severe stroke. He is the first ex-president to die since Lyndon Johnson in 5trangely tortured grunge pioneer Kurt Cobain, front man of the band Nirvana, commits suicide, leaving behind wife Courtney Love and a baby daughter. Numerous tasteless jokes about the smell of teen spirit ensue.

On June 17, television viewers across the country are treated to the image of a white Ford Bronco leading police on may have been the slowest highspeed chase ever, with spectators cheering the Bronco on from the roadside. The driver is football legend O.I. Simpson, who would eventually be arrested and charged with the murder of his wife Nicole and her "friend" Ronald Goldman. As embarrassing and unusual as this situation is, it pales in comparison with the three-rine circus the trial becomes



BackwardsCompatible

You know, a name this bad should never have the word "special" in the title, it's too easy a joke, - Page 117, Don't let the title change fool you. That fuzzy little bear is still in some serious trouble. - Page 34, 2.2 trillion polygons? This, dear friends, is what we're talking about when we say next-generation technology. - Page 46. How to make a game producer uncomfortable 101: "I've just got to ask ... is this inter fily homogratic?" - Page 102. This line was going to be a dever play on this name's title and some obscure sons lyncs, but Torn claims that our readers don't listen to Kansas. - Page 42. Dear Gene, You've aiready married Shannon Tweed, and you're a rock star. Maybe you should leave the games alone. - Page 125. We wanted to get a shot of Anthony Perkins bursting in with a knife, but they keep insisting he's not in the rame. - Page 97 So realistic, you can feel the flesh peeling off your kneecaps. - Page S3. The wind up, the ptth ... and it's a balk - Page IIO. Little know fact: the original name of this game was "Cool Breeze Bob". No Joke. - Page I20. Wow. Castle Greyskull grew hands - Page rite marine mammal since Darwin, from SeoQuest DSV. Oh, walt, we hated Darwin. - Page 107. Finally we get to see what goes on inside the secret ninja locker room. - Page IIS. That's a horse? Yealf; right. And an M4A1 Sherman is a Mlata. - Page 3L A racing game that actually goes too fast? Now that's the kind of problem you want to have. - Page 37. So what If this game is based upon a book. So were lots of other games: Tetris, Pong. Asteroids, Street Fighter II: Turi Hyper Fighting ... - Page 116. There's surely some deep symbolism behind this painting, but we still wouldn't want to look at it. every day - Pore 91. We sent a team to Las Vegas, but they mostly just played tons of old video games. Hardcore, or ngs of geekdom? One guess. - Page 6. Everything you savays wanted to know about broadband but dufn't bother asking. -Page 78. Supposedly, they originally hired Patrick Swayze to be the model for the main character, but he kept trying to

NextMonth PS2 Arrives



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